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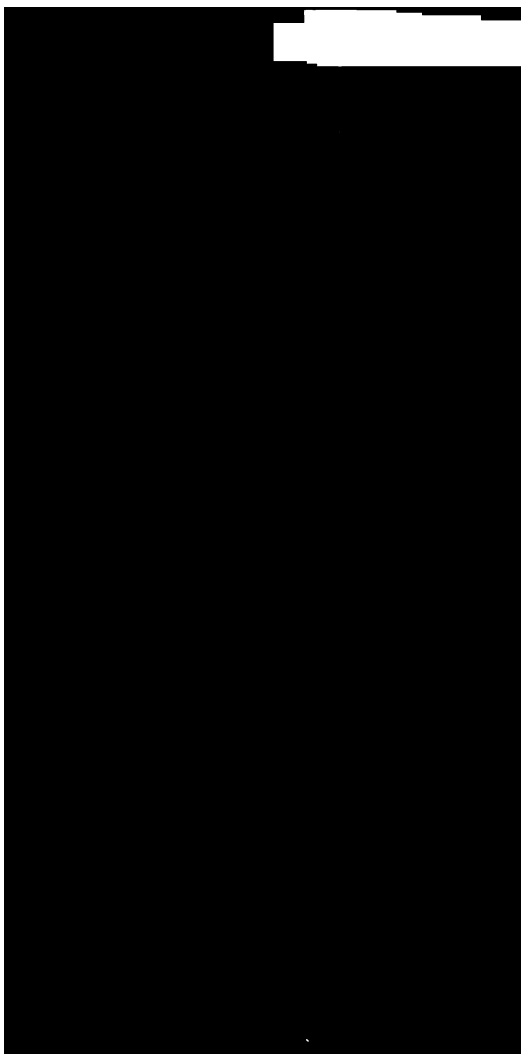
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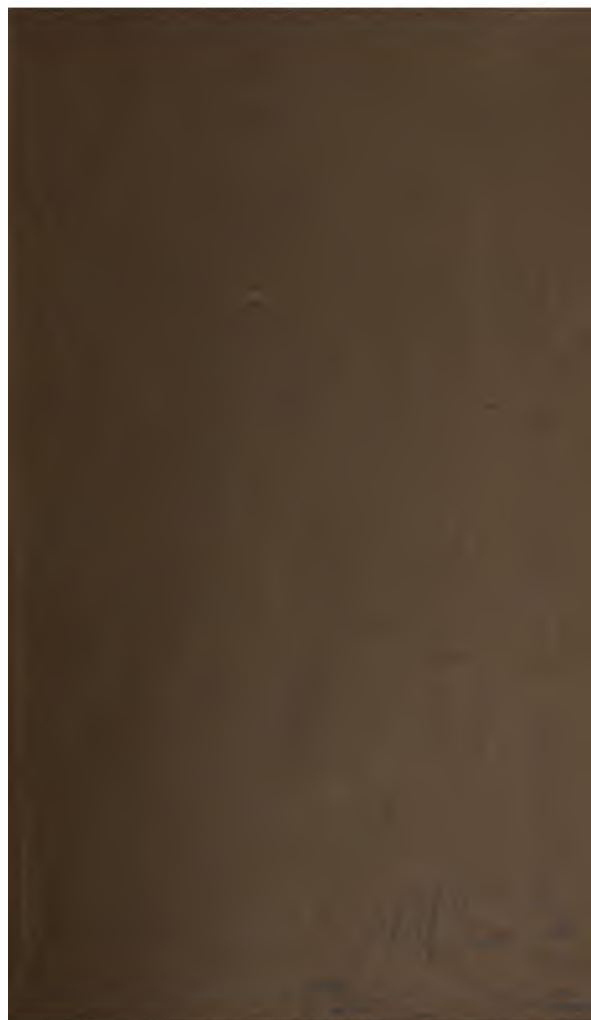
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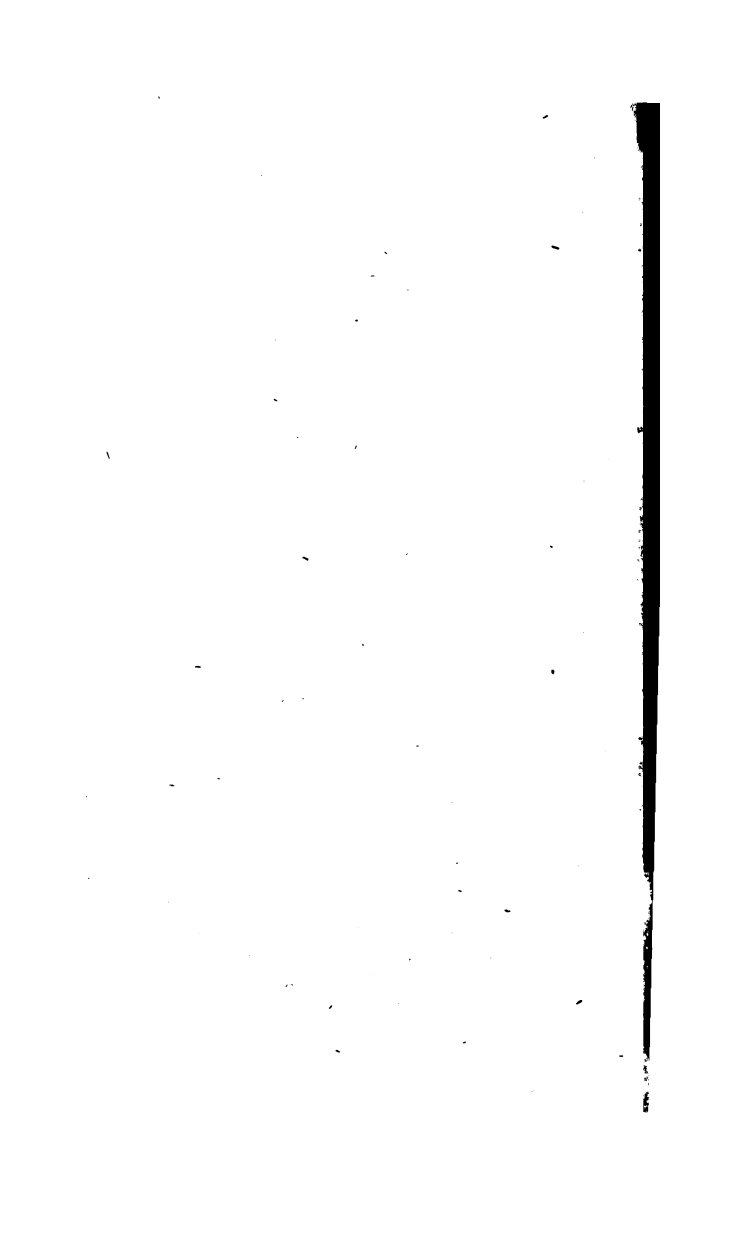
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BELL's
BRITISH THEATRE.

VOL XXVII.



BELL's
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BELL's
BRITISH THEATRE.

CONSISTING OF
THE MOST ESTEEMED
ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOL. XXVII.

CONTAINING
THE PROVOK'D WIFE, ... BY VANBRUGH.
THE FUNERAL, ... — STEELE.
THE ROYAL CONVERT, . . . — ROWE.
MAN OF THE WORLD, ... — MACKLIN.

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1797.

MD



THE
PROVOK'D WIFE.

A
COMEDY,
By SIR JOHN VANBRUGH,

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION;

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK.

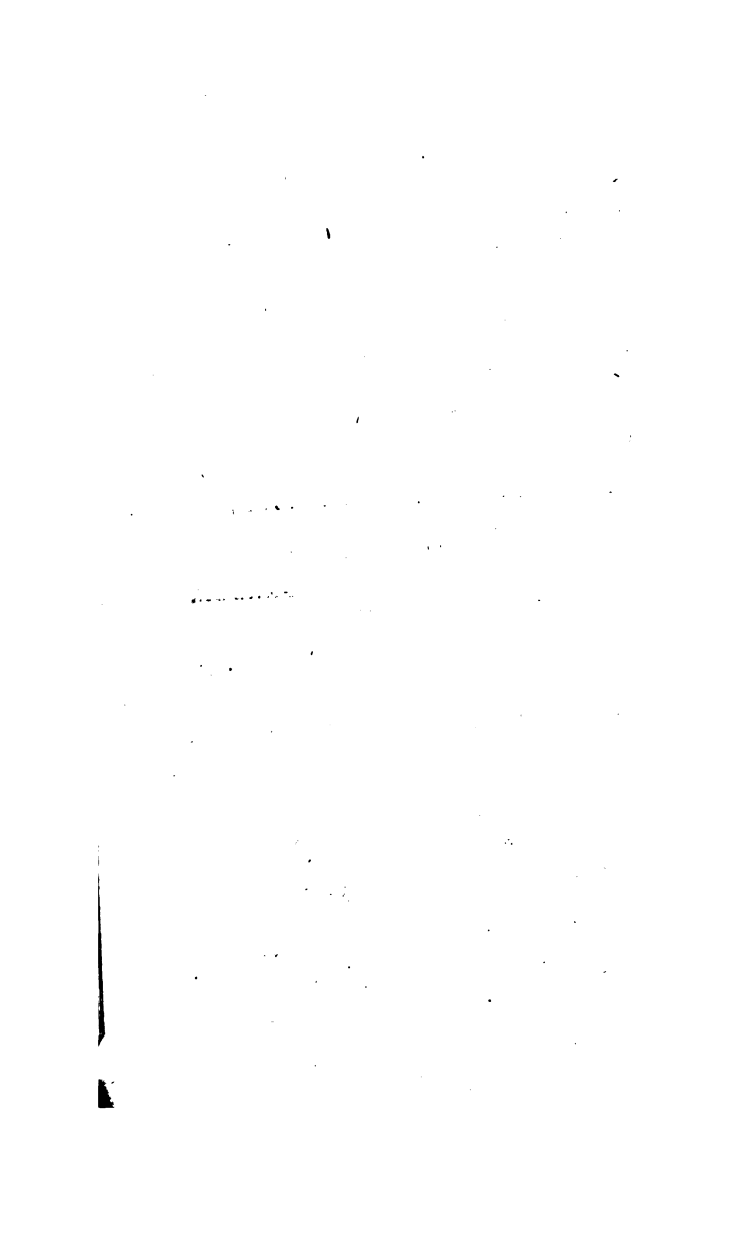
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M BCCXCIV.



THE PROVOK'D WIFE.

THIS Play has abundance of whimsical situation, although the Characters are not very powerfully discriminated. Sir John was sensible of the grossness of making cuckoldom familiar, and thus left the point doubtful to the object, at the close of the Play.

We know that no provocations can morally justify the entertainment of a Gallant. It is true no delicate or sensible woman can be expected to bear the intemperate tyranny of a Sir JOHN BRUTE, but the law has properly provided her a remedy.

Through the whole Drama, the dialogue is excessively smart, and frequently witty.—The manners are so far valuable to us, as they exhibit what was thought a Rake in the time of VANBRUGH. To say the truth, however, the character has suffered little change; the whole consists in abusing an unfortunate class of females, and assaulting the nightly guardians of the Peace.

In the first form of the Play, Sir JOHN BRUTE's disguise is the Rector's gown—whether he disliked this sarcasm as injurious to the Clergy, or thought it less comic, I know not, but he afterwards altered it to the Lady's habit as it now stands.

It was, as a full atonement for the licentiousness of the Provoked Wife, that he conceived and began the Provoked Husband.

The great BETTERTON was the original Sir JOHN BRUTE.

PROLOGUE.

*SINCE 'tis the intent and business of the stage,
To copy out the follies of the age ;
To hold to every man a faithful glass,
And shew him of what species he's an ass :
I hope the next that teaches in the school,
Will shew our author he's a scribbling fool.
And that the satire may be sure to bite,
Kind Heav'n ! inspire some venom'd priest to write,
And grant some ugly lady may indite.
For I would have him lash'd, by Heav'n ! I wou'd,
Till his presumption swim away in blood.
Three plays at once proclaim a face of brass,
No matter what they are ; that's not the case,
To write three plays, e'en that's to be an ass.
But what I least forgive, he knows it too,
For to his cost he lately has known you.
Experience shews, to many a writer's smart,
You hold a court where mercy ne'er had part ;
So much of the old serpent's sting you have,
You love to damn, as Heav'n delights to save.
In foreign parts, let a bold volunteer,
For public good, upon the stage appear,
He meets ten thousand smiles to dissipate his fear.
All tickle on th' adventuring young beginner,
And only scourge the incorrigible sinner ;*

*leed his faults, but with a band
t his merits still may stand:
oy the follies of his pen,
shun 'em when he writes again.
o in this good-natur'd town,
ox, a poet, or a crown:
s play was al-ways knocking down.*

Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

CONSTANT,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farren,
HEARTFREE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
Sir JOHN BRUTE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Ryder.
Lord RAKE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Cubitt.
Col. BULLY,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Davies.
RAZOR,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Bernard.
Justice of the Peace,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Booth.

Women.

Lady BRUTE,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Pope.
BELINDA,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Wells.
Lady FANCYFUL,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Mattocks.
MADemoisELLE,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Morton.
CORNET,	-	-	-	-	Miss Stuart.

Constable and Watch.



THE
PROVOK'D WIFE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Sir JOHN BRUTE's House. *Enter Sir JOHN, solus.*

Sir John.

WHAT cloying meat is love——when matrimony's
he sauce to it! Two year's marriage has debauch'd
my five senses. Every thing I see, every thing I hear,
every thing I feel, every thing I smell, and every thing
I taste——methinks has wife in't.—No boy was ever
so weary of his tutor, no girl of her bib, no nun of
doing penance, or old maid of being chaste, as I am of
being married. Sure there's a secret curse entail'd
upon the very name of wife. My lady is a young lady,
a fine lady, a witty lady, a virtuous lady——and yet
I hate her. There is but one thing on earth I loathe
beyond her: that's fighting. Would my courage
come up to a fourth part of my ill-nature, I'd stand
buff to her relations, and thrust her out of doors. But
marriage has sunk me down to such an ebb of resolu-

tion, I dare not draw my sword, though even to rid of my wife. But here she comes.

Enter Lady BRUTE.

L. Brute. Do you dine at home to-day, Sir John

Sir John. Why, do you expect I should tell what I don't know myself?

L. Brute. I thought there was no harm in as you.

Sir John. If thinking wrong were an excuse for pertinence, women might be justified in most things they say or do.

L. Brute. I'm sorry I have said any thing to please you.

Sir John. Sorry for things past, is of as little instance to me, as my dining at home or abroad ought to be to you.

L. Brute. My enquiry was only that I might provided what you lik'd.

Sir John. Six to four you had been in the way there again; for what I lik'd yesterday I don't like to-day, and what I like to-day, 'tis odds I may n't like to-morrow.

L. Brute. But if I had ask'd you what you lik'd

Sir John. Why then there would be more to say about it than the thing is worth.

L. Brute. I wish I did but know how I might please you.

Sir John. Aye, but that sort of knowledge is a wife's talent.

L. Brute. Whate'er my talent is, I'm sure my will has ever been to make you easy.

Sir John. If women were to have their wills, the world would be finely govern'd.

L. Brute. What reason have I given you to use me as you do of late? It once was otherwise: you married me for love.

Sir John. And you me for money: so you have your reward, and I have mine.

L. Brute. What is it that disturbs you?

Sir John. A parson.

L. Brute. Why, what has he done to you?

Sir John. He has married me, and be damn'd to him.

[*Exit.*]

L. Brute. The devil's in the fellow, I think.—I was told before I married him, that thus 'twould be: but I thought I had charms enough to govern him; and that where there was an estate, a woman must needs be happy: so my vanity has deceiv'd me, and my ambition has made me uneasy. But there's some comfort still; if one would be reveng'd of him, these are good times; a woman may have a gallant, and a separate maintenance too.—The surly puppy—yet he's a fool for't: for hitherto he has been no monster: but who knows how far he may provoke me? I never lov'd him, yet I have been ever true to him; and that, in spite of all the attacks of art and nature upon a poor weak woman's heart, in favour of a tempting lover. Methinks so noble a defence as I have made, should be rewarded with a better usage—Or who can tell.—

Perhaps a good part of what I suffer from my husband, may be a judgment upon me for my cruelty to my lover—But hold——let me go no further——I think I have a right to alarm this surly brute of mine—but if I know my heart—it will never let me go so far as to injure him.

Enter BELINDA.

L. Brute. Good morrow, dear cousin.

Bel. Good morrow, madam, you look pleas'd this morning.

L. Brute. I am so.

Bel. With what, pray?

L. Brute. With my husband.

Bel. Drown husbands; for yours is a provoking fellow: as he went out just now, I pray'd him to tell me what time of day 't was; and he ask'd me if I took him for the church-clock, that was oblig'd to tell all the parish.

L. Brute. He has been saying some good-obliging things to me too. In short, Belinda, he has us'd me so barbarously of late, that I could almost resolve to play the downright wife—and cuckold him.

Bel. That would be downright indeed.

L. Brute. Why, after all, there's more to be said for 't than you'd imagine, child. He is the first aggressor, not I.

Bel. Ah, but you know we must return good for evil.

L. Brute. That may be a mistake in the translation.

thee, be of my opinion, Belinda ; for I'm positive in the right ; and if you 'll keep up the pretence of a woman, you 'll likewise be positive you are in the right, whenever you do any thing you have to do. But I shall play the fool and jest on, till I see you begin to think I 'm in earnest.

I sha'n't take the liberty, madam, to think of saying that you desire to keep a secret from me.

Belinda. Alas, my dear, I have no secrets. My husband could ne'er yet confine my tongue.

Your eyes, you mean ; for I am sure I have been gadding, when your tongue has been lock'd up enough.

Belinda. My eyes gadding ! Pr'ythee after who,

Why, after one that thinks you hate him, as I know you love him.

Belinda. Constant, you mean.

I do so.

Belinda. Lord, what should put such a thing into your head ?

That which puts things into most people's observation.

Belinda. Why, what have you observ'd, in the matter of wonder ?

I have observ'd you blush when you met him ; run yourself away from him ; and then be out of humour with every thing about you : in a word, never poor creature so spurr'd on by desire, or so much in with fear !

L. Brute. How strong is fancy!

Bel. How weak is woman!

L. Brute. Pr'ythee, niece, have a better opinion of your aunt's inclination.

Bel. Dear aunt, have a better opinion of your niece's understanding.

L. Brute. You 'll make me angry.

Bel. You 'll make me laugh.

L. Brute. Then you are resolv'd to persist!

Bel. Positively.

L. Brute. And all I can say——

Bel. Will signify nothing——

L. Brute. Though I should swear 't were false——

Bel. I should think it true.

L. Brute. Then let us forgive, [*kissing her.*] for we have both offended: I, in making a secret; you, in discovering it.

Bel. Good nature may do much: but you have more reason to forgive one, than I have to pardon t' other.

L. Brute. 'Tis true, Belinda, you have given me so many proofs of your friendship, that my reserve has been, indeed, a crime: “but that you may more easily
“forgive me, remember, child, that when our nature
“prompts us to a thing our honour and religion forbid
“us, we would (were it possible) conceal, even
“from the soul itself, the knowledge of the body's
“weakness.

“*Bel.* Well, I hope to make your friend amends;
“you 'll hide nothing from her for the future, though
“the body should still grow weaker and weaker.

L. Brute. "No, from this moment I have no more
"reserve;" and as proof of my repentance, I own,
Belinda, I am in danger. "Merit and wit assault me
"from without, nature and love solicit me within;
"my husband's barbarous usage piques me to revenge;
"and Satan, catching the fair occasion, throws in my
"way that vengeance, which of all vengeance pleases
"woman best.

"*Bel.* 'Tis well Constant do n't know the weakness
"of the fortification; for, o' my conscience, he'd soon
"on to the assault.

L. Brute. "Ay, and I'm afraid carry the town too."
But whatever you may have observ'd, I have dissem-
bled so well as to keep him ignorant. So you see I'm
no coquet, Belinda: "and if you'll follow my advice,
"you'll never be one neither. 'Tis true, coquetry is
"one of the main ingredients in the natural composi-
"tion of a woman; and I, as well as others, could be
"well enough pleas'd to see a crowd of young fellows
"ogling, and glancing, and watching all occasions to
"do forty foolish officious things: nay, should some
"of 'em push on, even to hanging or drowning: why
"—faith—if I should let pure woman alone, I should
"e'en be too well pleas'd with it.

"*Bel.* I'll swear 't would tickle me strangely.

"*L. Brute.* But after all, 'tis a vicious practice in
"us, to give the least encouragement, but where we
"design to come to a conclusion." For 'tis an un-
reasonable thing to engage a man in a disease, which
we before-hand resolve we will never apply a cure to.

Bel. 'Tis true; but then a woman must abandon one of the supreme blessings of her life. For I am fully convinced, no man has half that pleasure in gallanting a mistress, as a woman has in jilting a gallant.

L. Brute. The happiest woman then on earth must be our neighbour.

Bel. Oh, the impertinent composition! She has vanity and affectation enough to make her a ridiculous original, and in spite of all that art and nature ever furnish'd to any of her sex before her.

L. Brute. She concludes all men her captives; and whatever course they take, it serves to confirm her in that opinion.

Bel. If they shun her, she thinks 't is modesty, and takes it for a proof of their passion.

L. Brute. And if they are rude to her, 't is conduct, and done to prevent town-talk.

Bel. When her folly makes 'em laugh, she thinks "they are pleas'd with her wit.

L. Brute. And when her impertinence makes 'em "dull, concludes they are jealous of her favours."

Bel. All their actions and their words, she takes for granted, aim at her.

L. Brute. And pities all other women, because she thinks they envy her.

Bel. Pray, out of pity to ourselves, let us find a better subject—for I'm weary of this. Do you think your husband inclin'd to jealousy?

L. Brute. O no; he does not love me well enough for that. Lord, how wrong men's maxims are!—

They are seldom jealous of their wives, unless they are very fond of 'em: whereas they ought to consider the women's inclinations, for there depends their fate. Well, men may talk; but they are not so wise as we—that 's certain.

Bel. At least in our affairs.

L. Brute. Nay, I believe we should out-do 'em in the business of the state too: for, methinks, they do and undo, and make but bad work on't.

Bel. Why then do n't we get into the intrigues of government, as well as they?

L. Brute. Because we have intrigues of our own, that make us more sport, child. And so let's in, and consider of 'em. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Dressing-Room. Enter Lady FANCYFUL, MADEMOISELLE, and CORNET.

L. Fan. How do I look this morning?

Cor. Your ladyship looks very ill, truly.

L. Fan. Lard, how ill-natur'd thou art, Cornet, to tell me so, though the thing should be true. Dd n't you know that I have humility enough to be but too easily out of conceit with myself? Hold the glass; I dare say that will have more manners than you have. Mademoiselle, let me have your opinion too.

Madem. My opinion pe, matam, dat your ladyship never look so well in your life.

L. Fan. Well, the French are the prettiest obliging people; they say the most acceptable, well-manner'd things—and never flatter.

Madem. Your ladyship say great justice inteed.

L. Fan. Nay, every thing is just in my house but Cornet. The very looking-glass gives her the *dementi*. But I'm almost afraid it flatters me, it makes me look so very engaging. [*Looking affectedly in the glass.*]

Madem. Inteed, matam, your face pe handsomer den all de looking-glass in de world, *croyez moy*.

L. Fan. But is it possible my eyes can be so languishing—and so very full of fire?

Madem. Matam, if de glass was burning-glass, I believe your eyes set de fire in de house.

L. Fan. You may take that night-gown Mademoiselle: get out of the room, Cornet—I ca' n't endure you. This wench, methinks, does look so insufferably ugly.

Madem. Every ting look ugly, matam, dat stand by your latyship.

L. Fan. No, really, Mademoiselle, methinks you look mighty pretty.

Madem. Ah, matam; de moon have no *eclat*, ven de sun appear.

L. Fan. O, pretty expression! Have you ever been in love, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Ouy, matam. [*Sighing.*]

L. Fan. And were you belov'd again?

Madem. No, matam. [*Sighing.*]

L. Fan. O ye gods! What an unfortunate creature

should I be in such a case! But nature has made me nice for my own defence: I'm nice, strangely nice, Mademoiselle. I believe were the merit of whole mankind bestow'd upon one single person, I should still think the fellow wanted something to make it worth my while to take notice of him: and yet I could love—nay, fondly love, were it possible to have a thing made on purpose for me: for I'm not cruel, Mademoiselle; I'm only nice.

Madem. Ah; matam, I wish I was fine gentleman for your sake. I do all de ting in de world to get a little way into your heart. I make song, I make verse, I give you de serenade, I give great many present to Mademoiselle; I no eat, I no sleep, I be lean, I be mad, I hang myself, I drown myself. Ah, *ma chere dame, que je vous aimerois.* [*Embracing her.*]

L. Fan. Well, the French have strange obliging ways with 'em; you may take those two pair of gloves, Mademoiselle.

Madem. Me humbly tank my sweet lady.

Enter Servant with a letter.

Serv. Madam, here 's a letter for your ladyship.

L. Fan. 'Tis thus I am importuned every morning, Mademoiselle. Pray, how do the French ladies when they are thus accablées?

Madem. Matam, dey never complain. Au contraire, when one Frense laty have got a hundred lover—den she do all she can—to get a hundred more.

L. Fan. Well, let me die, I think they have le'go

bon. For 'tis an unutterable pleasure to be adored by all the men, and envied by all the women——Yet I'll swear I'm concerned at the torture I give 'em. Lord, why was I formed to make the whole creation uneasy, But let me read my letter. [Reads.]

“ If you have a mind to hear of your faults, instead of being praised for your virtues, take the pains to walk in the Green-walk in St. James's Park, with your woman, an hour hence. You'll there meet one, who hates you for some things, as he could love you for others, and therefore is willing to endeavour your reformation——If you come to the place I mention, you'll know who I am : if you don't, you never shall; so take your choice.”

This is strangely familiar, Mademoiselle; now have I a provoking fancy to know who this impudent fellow is.

Madem. Den take your scarf and your mask, and go to de rendezvous. De Frense laty do justement comme ça.

L. Fan. Rendezvous! What, rendezvous with a man, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Eh, pourquoi non?

L. Fan. What, and a man perhaps I never saw in my life!

Madem. Tant mieux: c'est donc quelque chose de nouveau.

L. Fan. Why, how do I know what designs he may have? He may intend to ravish me, for aught I know.

Madem. Ravish! Bagatelle. I would fain see one impudent rogue ravish Mademoiselle. Oui, je le voudrois.

Fan. O, but my reputation, Mademoiselle, my
ation ; ah, ma chere reputation !

idem. Matam—Quand on l'a une fois perdu—
en est plus embarrassée.

Fan. Fie, Mademoiselle, fie ; reputation is a jewel,

idem. Qui coute bien chere, matam.

Fan. Why sure you would not sacrifice your ho-
to your pleasure.

idem. Je suis philosophe.

Fan. Bless me, how you talk ! Why, what if ho-
be a burden, Mademoiselle, must it not be borne ?

idem. Chaqu'un à sa façon—Quand quelque chose
commode, moi—je m'en defais, vite.

Fan. Get you gone, you little naughty French-
in you : I vow and swear I must turn you out of
, if you talk thus.

idem. Turn me out of doors !—turn yourself
f doors, and go see what de gentleman have to say
u—Tenez. Voilà [*Giving her her things hastily.*]

esharp, voilà votre coife, voilà votra masque,
tout. Hey, Mercure, coquin : call one chair for
n, and one oder [*Calling within.*] for me. Va
vite. [*Turning to her lady, and helping her on
hastily with her things.*]

ie, matam ; depechez vous donc. Mon dieu,
es scrupules !

Fan. Well, for once, Mademoiselle, I'll follow
advicé, out of the intemperate desire I have to
who this ill-bred fellow is. But I have too
delicatesse to make a practice on't.

Madem. Belle chose vrayment que la delicates lors qu'il s'agit de divertir——à ça—Vous voilà éqpée, partons.—Hé bien ? qu' avez vous donc !

L. Fan. J'ay peur.

Madem. Je n'en ai point moi.

L. Fan. I dare not go.

Madem. Demeurez donc.

L. Fan. Je suis poltrone.

Madem. Tant pis pour vous.

L. Fan. Curiosity's a wicked devil.

Madem. C'est une charmante sainte.

L. Fan. It ruined our first parents.

Madem. Elle a bien diverti leurs enfans.

L. Fan. L'honneur est contre.

Madem. Le plaisir est pour.

L. Fan. Must I then go ?

Madem. Must you go ?——must you eat, must drink, must you sleep, must you live ? De nature you do one, de nature bid you do toder. Vous m'erez enrager.

L. Fan. But when reason corrects nature, Mademoiselle.

Madem. Elle est donc bien insolente, c'est sa s'ainée.

L. Fan. Do you then prefer your nature to reason, Mademoiselle ?

Madem. Oui da.

L. Fan. Pourquoi ?

Madem. Because my nature make me merry, reason make me mad.

L. Fan. Ah, la méchante Française.

Madem. Ah, la belle Anglaise.

[Exit, forcing her lady off.]

Æ II. SCENE I.

1. James's Park. Enter Lady FANCYFUL and MADEMOISELLE.

Lady Fancyful.

NELL, I vow, Mademoiselle, I 'm strangely impatient to know who this confident fellow is.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Look, there's Heartfree. But sure it ca'n't be him: e's a professed woman-hater. Yet who knows what my wicked eyes may have done?

Madem. Il nous approche, Matam.

L. Fan. Yes, 'tis he: now will he be most intolerably cavalier, though he should be in love with me.

Heart. Madam, I 'm your humble servant; I perceive you have more humility and good-nature than I thought you had.

L. Fan. What you attribute to humility and good-nature, sir, may perhaps be only due to curiosity. I had a mind to know who 't was had ill manners enough to write that letter.

[Throwing him his letter,

Heart. Well, and now I hope you are satisfied.

L. Fan. I am so, sir; good-by t'ye.

Heart. Nay, hold there; though you have done your business, I ha'n't done mine: by your ladyship's leave, we must have one moment's prattle together. Have you a mind to be the prettiest woman about town, or not? How she stares upon me! What! this passes for an impertinent question with you now, because you think you are so already.

L. Fan. Pray, sir, let me ask you a question in my turn: by what right do you pretend to examine me?

Heart. By the same right that the strong govern the weak, because I have you in my power; for you cannot get so quickly to your coach, but I shall have time enough to make you hear every thing I have to say to you.

L. Fan. These are strange liberties you take, Mr. Heartfree.

Heart. They are so, madam, but there's no help for it; for know that I have a design upon you.

L. Fan. Upon me, sir!

Heart. Yes; and one that will turn to your glory, and my comfort, if you will be but a little wiser than you use to be.

L. Fan. Very well, sir.

Heart. Let me see—Your vanity, madam, I take to be about some eight degrees higher than any woman's in the town, let t' other be who she will; and my indifference is naturally about the same pitch. Now could you find the way to turn this indifference into fire and flame, methinks your vanity ought to be satisfied; and this, perhaps, you might bring about upon pretty reasonable terms.

L. Fan. And pray at what rate would this indifference be bought off, if one should have so depraved an appetite to desire it?

Heart. Why, madam, to drive a quaker's bargain, and make but one word with you, if I do part with it—you must lay down—your affectation.

L. Fan. My affectation, sir!

Heart. Why I ask you nothing but what you may very well spare.

L. Fan. You grow rude, sir. Come, Mademoiselle, it is high time to be gone.

Madem. Allons, allons, allons.

Heart. [*Stopping them.*] Nay, you may as well stand still; for hear me you shall, walk which way you please.

L. Fan. What mean you, sir?

Heart. I mean to tell you, that you are the most ungrateful woman upon earth.

L. Fan. Ungrateful! to whom?

Heart. To nature.

L. Fan. Why, what has nature done for me?

Heart. What you have undone by art! It made you handsome; it gave you beauty to a miracle, a shape without a fault, wit enough to make them relish, and so turned you loose to your own discretion; which has made such work with you, that you are become the pity of our sex, and the jest of your own. There is not a feature in your face, but you have found the way to teach it some affected convulsion; your feet, your hands, your very fingers ends are directed never to move without some ridiculous air or other; and

your language is a suitable trumpet, to draw people's eyes upon the raree-show.

Madem. [*Aside.*] Est ce qu'on fait l'amour en Angleterre comme ça ?

L. Fan. [*Aside.*] Now could I cry for madness, but that I know he'd laugh at me for it.

Heart. Now do you hate me for telling you the truth, but that's because you don't believe 'tis so; for were you once convinced of that, you'd reform for your own sake.

L. Fan. Every circumstance of nice breeding must needs appear ridiculous, to one who has so natural an antipathy to good manners.

Heart. But suppose I could find the means to convince you, that the whole world is of my opinion.

L. Fan. Sir, though you, and all the world you talk of, should be so impertinently officious, as to think to persuade me I don't know how to behave myself; I should still have charity enough for my own understanding, to believe myself in the right, and all you in the wrong.

Madem. Le voilà mort.

[*Exeunt Lady Fanciful and Mademoiselle.*]

Heart. [*Gazing at her.*] There her single clapper has published the sense of the whole sex. Well, this once I have endeavoured to wash the black-moor white, but henceforward I'll sooner undertake to teach sincerity to a courtier, generosity to a usurer, honesty to a lawyer, than discretion to a woman I see has once set her heart upon playing the fool.

Enter CONSTANT.

v. Constant.

Good morrow, Jack : What are you doing this morning ?

t. Doing ! guess, if you can.—Why, I have been endeavouring to persuade my Lady Fanciful, that she is the most foolish woman about town.

A pretty endeavour truly.

t. I have told her, in as plain English as I can speak, both what the town says of her, and what she says of her. In short, I have used her as an absolver, which would do Magna Charta.

And how does she take it ?

t. As children do pills ; bite them, but ca'n't swallow them.

But pr'ythee, what has put it into your head, my man, to turn reformer ?

t. Why, one thing was, the morning hung upon my hands, I did not know what to do with myself ; and I thought, that as little as I care for women, I could with patience one that Heaven had taken such pains about, be so very industrious to make the best of the Jack-pudding of the creation.

Well, now could I almost wish to see my cruel mistress make the self-same use of what Heaven has bestowed on her, that so I might be cured of the same distemper ; it makes me so very uneasy ; for love, love is the devil's fil, Heartfree.

t. And why do you let the devil govern you ?

Con. Because I have more flesh and blood than grace and self-denial. My dear, dear mistress, 'sdeath! that so genteel a woman should be a saint, when religion's out of fashion.

Heart. Nay, she's much in the wrong truly; but who knows how far time and good example may prevail?

Con. O! they have played their parts in vain already; 't is now two years since the fellow her husband invited me to his wedding; and there was the first time I saw that charming woman, whom I have loved ever since; but she is cold, my friend, still cold as the northern star.

Heart. So are all women by nature, which makes them so willing to be warmed.

Con. O do n't profane the sex; pr'ythee think them all angels for her sake; for she's virtuous even to a fault.

Heart. A lover's head is a good accountable thing truly; he adores his mistress for being virtuous, and yet is very angry with her because she wo n't be kind.

Con. Well, the only relief I expect in my misery, is to see thee some day or other as deeply engaged as myself, which will force me to be merry in the midst of all my misfortunes.

Heart. That day will never come, be assured, Ned:
“not but that I can pass a night with a woman, and
“for the time, perhaps, make myself as good sport as
“you can do. Nay, I can court a woman too, call
“her nymph, angel, goddess, what you please: but

"here's the difference between you and I; I persuade
"a woman she's an angel, and she persuades you she's
"one." But pr'ythee let me tell you how I avoid
falling in love; that which serves me for prevention,
may chance to serve you for a cure.

Con. Well, use the ladies moderately then, and I'll
hear you.

Heart. That using them moderately undoes us all: but
I'll use them justly, and that you ought to be satisfied
with. I always consider a woman, not as the taylor, the
shoe-maker, the tire-woman, the semstress, and (which
is more than all that) the poet makes her; but I consi-
der her as pure nature has contrived her, and that
more strictly than I should have done our old grand-
mother Eve, had I seen her naked in the garden; for I
consider her turned inside out. Her heart well ex-
amined, I find there pride, vanity, covetousness, indis-
cretion; but above all things, malice: plots eternally
forging to destroy one another's reputations, and as
honestly to charge the levity of men's tongues with
the scandal; hourly debates how to make poor gentle-
men in love with them, with no other intent but to use
them like dogs when they have done; a constant de-
sire of doing more mischief, and an everlasting war
waged against truth and good-nature.

Con. Very well, sir, an admirable composition, truly!

Heart. Then for her outside, I consider it merely
as an outside; she has a thin tiffany covering; just
over such stuff as you and I are made on. As for her
notion, her mien, her airs, and all those tricks, I know

they affect you mightily. If you should see your mistress at a coronation, dragging her peacock's train, with all her state and insolence about her, 't would strike you with all the awful thoughts that Heaven itself could pretend to form you: whereas I turn the whole matter into a jest, and suppose her strutting in the self-same stately manner, with nothing on but her stays, and her scanty quilted under petticoat.

Con. Hold thy profane tongue; for I 'll hear no more,

Heart. What, you 'll love on then?

Con. Yes.

Heart. Yet have no hopes at all.

Con. None.

Heart. Nay, the resolution may be discreet enough; perhaps you have found out some new philosophy, that love, like virtue, is its own reward: so you and your mistress will be as well content at a distance, as others that have less learning are in coming together.

Con. No; but if she should prove kind at last, my dear Heartfree. *[Embracing him,*

Heart. Nay, pr'ythee do n't take me for your mistress; for lovers are very troublesome.

Con. Well, who knows what time may do?

Heart. And just now he was sure time could do nothing.

Con. Yet not one kind glance in two years, is somewhat strange.

Heart. Not strange at all; she do n't like you, that's all the business.

Con. Pr'ythee do n't distract me.

Art. Nay, you are a good handsome young fellow, fight use you better. Come, will you go see her; ps she may have changed her mind; there's hopes, as long as she 's a woman.

l. O, 'tis in vain to visit her: sometimes to get a of her, I visit that beast her husband, but she nly finds some pretence to quit the room as soon nter.

Art. It 's mtnch she do n't tell him you have made o her too; for that 's another good-natured thing amongst women, in which they have several ends. times 't is to recommend their virtue, that they be kind with the greater security. Sometimes o make their husbands fight, in hopes they may lled, when their affairs require it should be so: most commonly 't is to engage two men in a quar- at they may have the credit of being fought for; the lover 's killed in the business, they cry, poor r, he had ill luck—and so they go to cards.

l. Thy injuries to women are not to be forgiven. to't, if ever you fall into their hands——

Art. They can 't use me worse than they do you, speak well of 'em. O ho! here comes the t.

Enter Sir JOHN BRUTE.

Art. Your humble servant, Sir John.

John. Servant, sir.

Art. How does all your family?

John. Pox o' my family.

Con. How does your lady? I ha' n't seen her abroad a good while.

Sir John. Do! I do n't know how she does, not I; she was well enough yesterday; I ha' n't been at home to-night.

Con. What, were you out of town?

Sir John. Out of town! No, I was drinking.

Con. You are a true Englishman; do n't know your own happiness. If I were married to such a woman, I would not be from her a night, for all the wine in France.

Sir John. Not from her!—'Oons—what a time should a man have of that!

Heart. Why, there's no division, I hope.

Sir John. No; but there's a conjunction, and that's worse; a pox of the parson—why the plague don't you too marry? I fancy I look like the devil to you.

Heart. Why, you do n't think you have horns do you?

Sir John. No, I believe my wife's religion will keep her honest.

Heart. And what will make her keep her religion?

Sir John. Persecution; and therefore she shall have it.

Heart. Have a care, knight, women are tender things,

Sir John. And yet, methinks, 't is a hard matter to break their hearts.

Con. Fy, fy! you have one of the best wives in the world, and yet you seem the most uneasy husband.

Sir John. Best wives!—the woman's well enough;

s no vice that I know of; but she's a wife, and in a wife; if I were married to a hogshead of matrimony would make me hate it.

rt. Why did you marry then, you were old h to know your own mind.

John. Why did I marry! I married because I mind to lay with her, and she would not let me.

rt. Why did you not ravish her?

John. Yes, and so have hedged myself into forty ills with her relations, besides buying my pardon: more than all that, you must know I was afraid of damned in those days: for I kept sneaking dly company, fellows that went to church, said to their meat, and had not the least tincture of y about them.

rt. But I think you have got into a better gang

John. Zoons, sir, my Lord Rake and I are hand love: I believe we may get our bones broke to- r to-night. Have you a mind to share a frolic?

r. Not I, truly; my talent lies in softer exercises.

John. What, a down bed and a strumpet? A pox very, I say. Will you come and drink with me fternoon?

r. I ca'n't drink to-day; but we'll come and sit our with you if you will.

John. Pough, pox, sit an hour! Why ca'n't you link?

r. Because I'm to see my mistress.

John. Who's that?

Con. Why do you use to tell ?

Sir John. Yes.

Con. So won't I.

Sir John. Why ?

Con. Because it is a secret.

Sir John. Would my wife knew it, 't would be no secret long.

Con. Why, do you think she can 't keep a secret ?

Sir John. No more than she could keep Lent.

Heart. Pr'ythee, tell it her to try, Constant.

Sir John. No, pr'ythee don't, that I mayn't be plagued with it.

Con. I'll hold you a guinea you don't make her tell it you.

Sir John. I'll hold you a guinea I do.

Con. Which way ?

Sir John. Why, I'll beg her not to tell it me.

Heart. Nay, if any thing does it, that will.

Con. But do you think, sir——

Sir John. 'Oons, sir, I think a woman and a secret are the two impertinentest themes in the universe: therefore pray let's hear no more of my wife nor your mistress. Damn 'em both with all my heart, and every thing else that daggles a petticoat, except four generous whores who are drunk with my Lord Rake and I ten times in a fortnight. [Exit.

Con. Here's a dainty fellow for you! and the verriest coward too. But his usage of his wife makes me ready to stab the villain.

Heart. Lovers are short-sighted: all their senses run

of feeling. This proceeding of his is the only earth can make your fortunate. If any thing ill with her to accept a gallant, 'tis his usage. Pr'ythee, take heart, I have great hopes for her since I can't bring you quite off her, I'll try to bring you quite on; for a whining lover is the nearest companion upon earth.

My dear friend, flatter me a little more with her; for whilst they prevail, I have Elysium here, and could melt with joy.

Pray, no melting yet; "let things go farthest." This afternoon, perhaps, we shall make an alliance. In the mean while, let's go dine at home and let hope get you a stomach [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Fancyful's House. Enter Lady FANCYFUL and
MADEMOISELLE.

Did you ever see any thing so importune, Mademoiselle?

Indeed, matam, to say de trute, he wants good-breeding.

Good-breeding! He wants to be caned, Mademoiselle. An insolent fellow! and yet let me expose my husband, 't is the only man on earth I could resolve to put my favours on, were he but a fine gentleman. Men but know how deep an impression a fine

gentleman makes in a lady's heart, they would reduce all their studies to that of good-breeding alone.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Will your ladyship please to dine yet?

L. Fan. Yes, let 'em serve. [*Exit Serv.*] Sure this Heartfree has bewitched me, Mademoiselle. "You can't imagine how oddly he mixt himself in my thoughts during my rapture e'en now." I vow 'tis a thousand pities he is not more polished; do n't you think so?

Madem. Matam, I think it so great pity, that if I was in your ladyship's place, I take him home in my house, I lock him up in my closet, and I never let him go, till I teach him every ting dat fine lady expect from fine gentleman.

L. Fan. Why truly, I believe I should soon subdue his brutality; for, without doubt, he has a strange penchant to grow fond of me, in spite of his aversion to the sex, else he would ne'er have taken so much pains about me. Lord, how proud would some poor creatures be of such a conquest! But I, alas! I don't know how to receive as a favour, what I take to be so infinitely my due. But what shall I do to new mould him, Mademoiselle, for till then, he's my utter aversion?

Madem. Matem, you must laugh at him in all de places dat you meet him, and turn into de redicule all he say, and all he do.

L. Fan. Why truly, satire has ever been of wondrous use to reform ill-manners. Besides, 't is my particular

talent to ridicule folks. I can be severe, strangely severe, when I will, Mademoiselle—Give me the pen and ink—I find myself whimsical—I'll write to him—Or I'll let it alone, and be severe upon him that way. [*Sitting down to write, rising up again.*]—Yet active severity is better than passive. [*Sitting down.*]—'Tis as good to let it alone too; for every lash I give him, perhaps he'll take for a favour.—[*Rising.*] Yet 'tis a sand pities so much satire should be lost. [*Sitting.*] it if it should have a wrong effect upon him, 'twould distract me. [*Rising.*]—Well, I must write though, after all. [*Sitting.*]—Or I'll let it alone, which is the same thing. [*Rising.*]

Madem. La voilà déterminée.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Opens and discovers Sir JOHN, Lady BRUTE, and BELINDA, rising from the table.

Sir John.

HERE; take away the things: I expect company. But first bring me a pipe: I'll smoke. [*To a Servant.*]

L. Brute. Lord, Sir John, I wonder you won't leave that nasty custom.

Sir John. Pr'ythee do n't be impertinent.

Bel. [*To L. Brute.*] I wonder who those are he expects this afternoon.

L. Brute. I'd give the world to know. Perhaps, 'tis

Constant, he comes here sometimes; if it does prove him, I'm resolved I'll share the visit.

Bel. We'll send for our work and sit here.

L. Brute. He'll choke us with his tobacco.

Bel. Nothing will choke us when we are doing what we have a mind to. Lovewell—

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. Madam.

L. Brute. Here; bring my cousin's work and mine hither. [*Exit Love. and re-enters with their work.*]

Sir John. Why, pox, can't you work somewhere else?

L. Brute. We shall be careful not to disturb you, sir.

Bel. Your pipe would make you too thoughtful, uncle, if you were left alone; our prittle prattle will cure your spleen.

Sir John. Will it so, Mrs. Pert! Now I believe it will so increase it; [*Sitting and smoking.*] I shall take my own house for a paper-mill.

L. Brute. [*To Bel. aside.*] Don't let's mind him; let him say what he will.

Sir John. A woman's tongue a cure for the spleen! 'oons—[*Aside.*] If a man had got the head-ach, they'd be for applying the same remedy.

L. Brute. You have done a great deal, Belinda, since yesterday.

Bel. Yes, I have work'd very hard; how do you like it?

L. Brute. O! 't is the prettiest fringe in the world. Well, cousin, you have the happiest fancy : pr'ythee advise me about altering my crimson petticoat.

Sir John. A pox o' your petticoat ; here's such a prating, a man can't digest his own thoughts for you.

L. Brute. Don't answer him. [*Aside.*].—Well, what do you advise me ?

Bel. Why, really, I would not alter it at all. Me-thinks 't is very pretty as it is.

L. Brute. Ay, that's true : but you know one grows weary of the prettiest things in the world, when one has had 'em long.

Sir John. Yes, I have taught her that.

Bel. Shall we provoke him a little ?

L. Brute. With all my heart. Belinda, do n't you long to be marry'd ?

Bel. Why, there are some things in it which I could like well enough.

L. Brute. What do you think you should dislike ?

Bel. My husband, a hundred to one else.

L. Brute. O ye wicked wretch ! Sure you don't speak as you think ?

Bel. Yes, I do : especially if he smok'd tobacco.

[*He looks earnestly at them.*]

L. Brute. Why, that many times takes off worse smells.

Bel. Then he must smell very ill indeed.

L. Brute. So some men will, to keep their wives from coming near them.

Bel. Then those wives should cuckold 'em at a distance. [*He rises in a fury, throws his pipe at them, and drives them out.*]

As they run off, enter CONSTANT and HEARTFREE.

Lady Brute runs against Constant.

Sir John. 'Oons, get you gone up stairs, you confederating strumpets you, or I'll cuckold you, with a vengeance.

L. Brute. O lord, he'll beat us, he'll beat us. Dear, dear Mr. Constant, save us. [*Exeunt L. Brute and Bel.*]

Sir John. I'll cuckold you, with a pox.

Con. Heav'n! Sir John, what's the matter?

Sir John. Sure if women had been ready created, the devil, instead of being kick'd down into hell, had been married.

Heart. Why, what new plagues have you found now?

Sir John. Why, these two gentlewomen did but hear me say I expected you here this afternoon; upon which, they presently resolv'd to take up the room, o' purpose to plague me and my friends.

Con. Was that all? Why, we should have been glad of their company.

Sir John. Then I should have been weary of yours; for I can't relish both together. They found fault with my smoking tobacco too, and said men stunk. But I have a good mind—to say something.

Con. No, nothing against the ladies, pray.

Sir John. Split the ladies. Come, will you sit down? —Give us some wine, fellow.—You wo n't smoke!

lo, nor drink neither, at this time; I must pardon.

m. What, this mistress of yours runs in your
 ll warrant it's some such squeamish minx as
 that's grown so dainty of late, she finds fault
 i a dirty shirt.

That a woman may do, and not be very
 ither.

n. "Pox o' the women, let's drink." Come,
 take one glass, though I send for a box of lo-
 sweeten your mouth after it.

I say, if one glass will satisfy you, I'll drink it,
 outting you to that expence.

n. Why, that's honest. Fill some wine, sir-
 , here's to you, gentlemen.—A wife's the
 To your both being married. [*They drink.*

O, your most humble servant, sir.

m. Well, how do you like my wine?

'Tis very good, indeed.

'Tis admirable.

m. Then give us t'other glass.

lo, pray excuse us now: we'll come another
 l then we won't spare it.

m. This one glass, and no more. Come, it
 your mistress's health; and that's a great
 ent from me, I assure you.

And 't is a very obliging one to me: so give
 asses.

m. So; let her live——[*He coughs in the glass.*
 And be kind.

Con. What 's the matter ? Does it go the wrong way ?

Sir John. If I had love enough to be jealous, I should take this for an ill omen : for I never drank my wife's health in my life, but I puk'd in my glass.

Con. O she 's too virtuous to make any reasonable man jealous.

Sir John. Pox of her virtue. If I could catch her adulterating, I might be divorc'd from her by law.

Heart. And so pay her a yearly pension, to be a distinguish'd cuckold.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's my Lord Rake, Colonel Bully, and some other gentlemen at the Blue Posts, desire your company.

Sir John. God's so, we are to consult about playing the devil to-night.

Heart. Well, we wo n't hinder business.

Sir John. Methinks I do n't know how to leave you two : but for once I must make bold. Or, look you—may be the conference may n't last long ! So if you 'll wait here half an hour, or an hour ; if I do n't come then—why then—I wo n't come at all.

Heart. [*To Constant.*] A good modest proposition, truly.

[*Aside.*]

Con. But let 's accept on 't, however. Who knows what may happen ?

Heart. Well, sir, to shew you how fond we are of your company, we 'll expect your return as long as we can,

Sir John. Nay, may be I may n't stay at all ; but business, you know, must be done. So, your servant. Or, hark you, if you have a mind to take a frisk with us, I have an interest with my lord ; I can easily introduce you.

Con. We are much beholden to you ; but for my part, I 'm engag'd another way.

Sir John. What ! to your mistress, I 'll warrant. Pr'ythee leave your nasty punk to entertain herself with her own wicked thoughts, and make one with us to-night.

Con. Sir, 't is business that is to employ me.

Heart. And me ; and business must be done, you know.

Sir John. Ay, women's business, though the world were consum'd for 't. [Exit.

Con. Farewell, beast ; and now, my dear friend, would my mistress be but as complaisant as some men's wives, who think it a piece of good-breeding to receive the visits of their husband's friends in his absence !

Heart. Why, for your sake, I could forgive her, though she should be so complaisant to receive something else in his absence." But what way shall we invent to see her ?

Con. O, ne'er hope it : invention will prove as vain as wishes.

Enter Lady BRUTE, and BELINDA.

Heart. What do you think now, friend ?

Con. I think I shall swoon.

Heart. I 'll speak first, then, while you fetch breath.

L. Brute. We think ourselves oblig'd, gentlemen, to come and return you thanks for your knight-errantry. We were just upon being devour'd by the fiery dragon.

Bel. Did not his fumes almost knock you down, gentlemen?

Heart. Truly, ladies, we did undergo some hardships; and should have done more, if some greater heroes than ourselves, hard by, had not diverted him.

Con. Though I am gild of the service you are pleas'd to say we have done you, yet I'm sorry we could do it in no other way, than by making ourselves privy to what you would perhaps have kept a secret.

Bel. For Sir John's part, I suppose he designed it no secret, since he made so much noise. And for myself, truly, I'm not much concern'd, since 't is fallen only into this gentleman's hand and your's; who, I have many reasons to believe, will neither interpret, nor report any thing to my disadvantage.

Con. Your good opinion, madam, was what I fear'd I never could have merited.

L. Brute. Your fears were vain, then, sir; for I'm just to every body.

Heart. Pr'ythée, Constant, what is 't you do to get the ladies' good opinions; for I'm a novice at it.

Bel. Sir, will you give me leaye to instruct you?

Heart. Yes, that I will, with all my soul, madam.

Bel. Why then, you must never be a sloven; never be out of humour; never smoke tobacco; nor drink, but when you are dry.

Heart. That 's hard.

Con. Nay, if you take his bottle from him, you break his heart, madam.

Bel. Why, is it possible the gentleman can love drinking?

Heart. Only by way of antidote.

Bel. Against what, pray?

Heart. Against love, madam.

L. Brute. Are you afraid of being in love, sir?

Heart. I should, if there were any danger of it.

L. Brute. Pray, why so?

Heart. Because I always had an aversion to being us'd like a dog.

Bel. Why, truly, men in love are seldom us'd better.

L. Brute. But was you never in love, sir?

Heart. No, I thank Heaven, madam.

Bel. Pray, where got you your learning then?

Heart. From other people's expence.

Bel. That 's being a spunger, sir, which is scarce honest : if you 'd buy some experience with your own money, as 't would be fairlier got, so 't would stick longer by you.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Madam, here 's my Lady Fancyful, to wait upon your ladyship.

L. Brute. Shield, me, kind Heaven! What an inundation of impertinence is here coming upon us!

Enter Lady FANCYFUL, who runs first to Lady Brute, then to Belinda, kissing them.

L. Fan. My dear Lady Brute, and sweet Belinda, methinks 't is an age since I saw you.

L. Brute. Yet 't is but three days ; sure you have pass'd your time very ill, it seems so long to you.

L. Fan. Why really, to confess the truth to you, I am so everlastingly fatigued with the addresses of unfortunate gentlemen, that were it not for the extravagancy of the example, I should e'en tear out these wicked eyes with my own fingers, to make both myself and mankind easy. What think you on 't, Mr. Heart-free, for I take you to be my faithful adviser ?

Heart. Why, truly, madam—I think every project that is for the good of mankind, ought to be encouraged.

L. Fan. Then I have your consent, sir ?

Heart. To do whatever you please, madam.

L. Fan. You had a much more limited complaisance this morning, sir. Would you believe it, ladies ? the gentleman has been so exceeding generous, to tell me of above fifty faults, in less time than it was well possible for me to commit two of them.

Con. Why, truly, madam, my friend there is apt to be something familiar with the ladies.

L. Fan. He is indeed, sir ; but he 's wondrous charitable with it : he has had the goodness to design a reformation, e'en down to my fingers ends.——'T was

thus, I think, sir, [*Opening her fingers in an awkward manner.*] You 'd have 'em stand—My eyes too he did not like : How was 't you would have directed 'em ? Thus I think. [*Staring at him.*]—Then there was something amiss in my gait too : I do n't know well how 't was ! but as I take it, he would have me walk like him. Pray, sir, do me the favour to take a turn or two about the room, that the company may see you. He 's sullen, ladies, and won't. But, to make short, and give you as true an idea as I can of the matter, I think 't was much about this figure in general, he would have moulded me to : but I was an obstinate woman, and could not resolve to make myself mistress of his heart, by growing as awkward as his fancy.

[She walks awkwardly about, staring and looking ungainly, then changes on a sudden to the extremity of her usual affectation.]

Heart. Just thus women do, when they think we are in love with 'em, or when they are so with us.

[Here Constant and Lady Brute talk together apart.]

L. Fan. 'T would, however, be less vanity for me, to conclude the former, than you the latter, sir.

Heart. Madam, all I shall presume to conclude, is, that if I were in love, you 'd find the means to make me soon weary on 't.

L. Fan. Not by over-fondness, upon my word, sir. But pr'ythee let's stop here ; for you are so much governed by instinct, I know you 'll grow brutish at it last.

Bel. [Aside.] Now am I sure she 's fond of him : I 'll

try to make her jealous. Well, for my part, I should be glad to find somebody would be so free with me, that I might know my faults, and mend 'em.

L. Fan. Then pray let me recommend this gentleman to you: I have known him some time, and will be surety for him, that upon a very limited encouragement on your side, you shall find an extended impudence on his.

Heart. I thank you, madam, for your recommendation: but hating idleness, I'm unwilling to enter into a place where I believe there would be nothing to do. I was fond of serving your ladyship, because I knew you'd find me constant employment.

L. Fan. I told you he'd be rude, Belinda,

Bel. O, a little bluntness is a sign of honesty, which makes me always ready to pardon it. So, sir, if you have no other objection to my service, but the fear of being idle in it, you may venture to list yourself: I shall find you work, I warrant you.

Heart. Upon those terms I engage, madam; and this with your leave, I take for earnest.

[Offers to kiss her hand.]

Bel. Hold there, sir; I'm none of your earnest givers. But if I'm well served, I give good wages, and pay punctually

[Heartfree and Belinda seem to continue talking familiarly together.]

L. Fan. *[Aside.]* I do n't like this jesting between 'em—Methinks the fool begins to look as if he were in earnest, but then he must be a fool indeed—Lard, what

a difference there is between me and her. [*Looking at Belinda scornfully.*] How I should despise such a thing if I were a man!—What a nose she has—What a chin—What a neck—Then her eyes—And the worst kissing lips in the universe—No, no, he can never like her, that's positive—Yet I can't suffer 'em together any longer. Mr. Heartfree, do you know that you and I must have no quarrel for all this? I can't forbear being a little severe now and then: but women, you know, may be allowed any thing.

Heart. Up to a certain age, madam.

L. Fan. Which I'm not yet past, I hope.

Heart. [*Aside.*] Nor never will, I dare swear.

L. Fan. [*To L. Brute.*] Come, madam, will your ladyship be witness to our reconciliation?

L. Brute. You are agreed then at last.

Heart. [*Slighly.*] We forgive.

L. Fan. [*Aside.*] That was a cold, ill-natur'd reply.

L. Brute. Then there's no challenges sent between you?

Heart. Not from me, I promise. [*Aside to Constant.*] But that's more than I'll do for her; for I know she can as well be hang'd as forbear writing to me.

Con. That I believe. But I think we had best be going, lest she should suspect something, and be malicious.

Heart. With all my heart.

Con. Ladies, we are your humble servants. I see Sir John is quite engag'd, 't would be in vain to expect him. Come, Heartfree. [*Exit.*]

Heart. Ladies, your servant. [*To Belinda.*] I hope, madam, you won't forget our bargain; I'm to say what I please to you. [*Exit.*]

Bel. Liberty of speech entire, sir.

L. Fan. [*Aside.*] Very pretty, truly—But how the blockhead went out languishing at her; and not a look towards me—Well, people may talk, but miracles are not ceas'd. For 't is more than natural, such a rude fellow as he, and such a little impertinent as she, should be capable of making a woman of my sphere uneasy. But I can bear her sight no longer—me-thinks, she's grown ten times uglier than Cornet. I must home and study revenge. [*To Lady Brute.*] Madam, your humble servant; I must take my leave.

L. Brute. What, going already, madam!

L. Fan. I must beg you 'll excuse me this once; for really I have eighteen visits to return this afternoon: so you see I'm importun'd by the women, as well as the men.

Bel. [*Aside.*] And she 's quits with them both.

L. Fan. [*Going.*] Nay, you shan't go one step out of the room.

L. Brute. Indeed I 'll wait upon you down.

L. Fan. No, sweet Lady Brute, you know I swoon at ceremony.

L. Brute. Pray give me leave.

L. Fan. You know I won't.

L. Brute. Indeed I must.

L. Fan. Indeed you shan't.

L. Brute. Indeed I will.

an. Indeed you shan't.

rute. Indeed I will.

an. Indeed you shan't. Indeed, indeed, indeed,
n't. [Exit, running; they follow.

Re-enter Lady BRUTE, sola.

rute. This impertinent woman has put me out
our for a fortnight—What an agreeable moment
foolish visit interrupted! Lord, what a pleasure
in doing what we should not do!

Re-enter CONSTANT.

re again!

Though the renewing my visit may seem a little
ar, I hope I shall obtain your pardon for it, ma-
when you know I only left the room, lest the
io was here should have been as malicious in her
s, as she is foolish in her conduct.

rute. He who has discretion enough to be tender
man's reputation, carries a virtue about him
ay atone for a great many faults..

If it has a title to atone for any, its pretensions
eeds be strongest, where the crime is love. "I
fore hope I shall be forgiven the attempt I have
: upon your heart; since my enterprize has been
ret to all the world but yourself.

Brute. Secrecy indeed, in sins of this kind, is
rgument of weight to lessen the punishment;

"but nothing's a plea for a pardon entire, without a
"sincere repentance.

"*Con.* If sincerity in repentance consists in sorrow
"for offending, no cloister ever inclos'd so true a pe-
"nitent as I should be. But I hope it cannot be reck-
"oned an offence to love, where it is a duty to adore."

L. Brute. 'Tis an offence, a great one, where it
would rob a woman of all she ought to be ador'd for,
her virtue.

Con. Virtue;—That phantom of honour, which
men in every age have so condemn'd; they have thrown
it amongst the women to scrabble for.

L. Brute. If it be a thing of so very little value, why
do you so earnestly recommend it to your wives and
daughters?

Con. We recommend it to our wives, madam, be-
cause we would keep 'em to ourselves; and to our
daughters, because we would dispose of 'em to others.

L. Brute. 'Tis then of some importance, it seems,
since you can't dispose of them without it.

"*Con.* That importance, madam, lies in the humour
"of the country, not in the nature of the thing. Pray
"what does your ladyship think of a powder'd coat for
"deep mourning?

"*L. Brute.* I think, sir, your sophistry has all the
"effect that you can reasonably expect it should have;
"it puzzles, but do n't convince.

"*Con.* I'm sorry for it.

"*L. Brute.* I'm sorry to hear you say so.

"*Con.* Pray why?

“ *L. Brute.* Because if you expected more from it, you have a worse opinion of my understanding than I desire you should have.

Con. [*Aside.*] “ I comprehend her : she would have me set a value upon her chastity, that I might think myself the more oblig’d to her, when she makes me a present of it.” [*To her.*] I beg you will believe I did but rally, madam ; “ I know you judge too well of right and wrong, to be deceiv’d by arguments like those.” And I hope you will have so favourable an opinion of my understanding too, to believe the thing all’d virtue has worth enough with me, to pass for an eternal obligation where’er ’t is sacrificed.

L. Brute. It is, I think, so great a one, as nothing can repay.

Con. Yes ; the making the man you love your everlasting debtor.

L. Brute. When debtors once have borrowed all we have to lend, they are very apt to grow shy of their creditors’ company.

Con. That, madam, is only when they are forc’d to borrow of usurers, and not of a generous friend. Let us choose our creditors, and we are seldom so ungrateful as to shun ’em.

L. Brute. What think you of Sir John, sir ? I was his free choice.

Con. I think he ’s married, madam.

L. Brute. Does marriage then exclude men from your rule of constancy ?

Con. It does. Constancy ’s a brave, free, haughty

generous, agent, that cannot buckle to the chains of wedlock.

“ *L. Brute.* Have you no exceptions to this general rule, as well as t’ other ?

“ *Con.* Yes, I would, after all, be an exception to it myself, if you were free in power and will to make me so.

“ *L. Brute.* Compliments are well plac’d, where ’tis impossible to lay hold on ’em.

“ *Con.* I would to Heaven ’t were possible for you to lay hold on mine, that you might see it is no compliment at all. But since you are already dispos’d of, beyond redemption, to one who does not know the value of the jewel you have put into his hands, I hope you would not think him greatly wrong’d, though it should sometimes be look’d on by a friend who knows how to esteem it as he ought.

“ *L. Brute.* If looking on ’t alone would serve his turn, the wrong perhaps might not be very great.

“ *Con.* Why, what if he should wear it now and then a day, so he gave good security to bring it home again at night ?

“ *L. Brute.* Small security I fancy, might serve for that. One might venture to take his word.

“ *Con.* Then where ’s the injury to the owner ?

“ *L. Brute.* ’Tis an injury to him, if he thinks it is one. For if happiness be seated in the mind, unhappiness must be so too.

“ *Con.* Here I close with you, madam, and draw my conclusive argument from your own position : If

"the injury lie in the fancy, there needs nothing but
"secrecy to prevent the wrong.

"L. Brute. [*Going.*] A surer way to prevent it, is
"to hear no more arguments in its behalf."

Con. [*Following her.*] But, madam—

L. Brute. But, sir, 't is my turn to be discreet now,
and not suffer too long a visit.

Con. [*Catching her hand.*] By Heaven, you shall not
stir, till you give me hopes that I shall see you again at
some more convenient time and place.

L. Brute. I give you just hopes enough—[*Breaking
from him.*] to get loose from you: and that 's all I can
afford you at this time. [*Exit, running.*]

Con. Now, by all that 's great and good, she 's a
charming woman. In what extasy of joy she has left
me! For she gave me hope. Did she not say she gave
me hope?—Hope! Ay, what hope?—enough to make
me let her go—Why, that 's enough in conscience.
Or, no matter how 't was spoke; hope was the word,
it came from her, and it was said to me.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Ha, Heartfree! Thou hast done me noble service in
prattling to the young gentlewoman without there:
come to my arms thou venerable bawd, and let me
squeeze thee [*Embracing him eagerly.*] as a new pair of
stays does a fat country girl, when she 's carried to
court to stand for a maid of honour.

Heart. Why, what the devil 's all this rapture for?

Con. Rapture! There's ground for rapture, man
There's hopes, my Heartfree—hopes, my friend.

Heart. Hopes! of what?

Con. Why, hopes that my lady and I together, (for 't is more than one body's work) should make Sir John a cuckold.

Heart. Pr'ythee, what did she say to thee?

Con. Say! What did she not say? she said that—says she—she said—Zoons, I don't know what she said; but she look'd as if she said every thing I'd have her; and so, if thou'lt go the tavern, I'll treat thee with any thing that gold can buy; I'll give all my silver among the drawers, make a bonfire before the doors; swear that the Pope's turn'd protestant and that all the politicians in England are of one mind.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Opens, and discovers Lord RAKE, Sir JOHN, &c. at a Table, drinking.

All. Huzza!

L. Rake. Come, boys, charge again—so—confusion to all order. Here's liberty of conscience.

All. Huzza!

L. Rake. Come, sing the song I made this morning to this purpose.

Sir John. 'T is wicked, I hope.

L. Rake. Don't I tell you that I made it?

Sir John. My lord, I beg your pardon for suspecting you of any virtue. Come, begin.

SONG,

By Colonel Bully.

*We're gayly yet, we're gayly yet,
And we're not very fow, but we're gayly yet.
Then sit ye a while, and tippie a bit,
For we's not very fow, but we're gayly yet,
And we're gayly yet, &c. &c.*

*There was a lad, and they cau'd him Dicky,
He ga' me a kiss, and I bit his lippy,
Then under my apron he shew'd me a trick;
And we's not very fow, but we're gayly yet.
And we're gayly yet, &c. &c.*

*There were three lads, and they were clad,
There were threc lasses, and them they had.
Threc trees in the orchard are newly sprung,
And we's a' git geer enough, we're but young.
And we're gayly yet, &c. &c.*

*Then up went Ailey, Ailey, up went Ailey now;
Then up with Ailey, quo' Crumma, we's get a' roaring fow.
And one was kiss'd in the barn, another was kiss'd on the
green,
And t' other behind the pease-stack, till the mow flew up to
her eyn.
Then up went Ailey, Ailey, &c. &c.*

*Now fyè, John Thompson, run,
Gin ever you run in your life,
De'el get ye ; but hye, my dear Jack,
There's a mon got to bed with your wife,
Then up went Ailey, &c. &c.*

*Then away John Thompson ran,
And e'gad he ran with speed,
But before he had run his length
The false loon had done the deed.
Then up went Ailey, &c. &c.*

" L. Rake. Well, how do you like it, gentlemen ?

" All. O, admirable !

" Sir John. I would not give a fig for a song that is
" not full of sin and impudence.

" L. Rake. Then my muse is to your taste. But
" drink away ; the night steals upon us ; we shall want
" time to be lewd in." Hey, page ! sally out, sirrah,
and see what's doing in the camp ; we'll beat up their
quarters presently.

Page. I'll bring your lordship an exact account.

[Exit.

" L. Rake. Now let the spirit of Clary go round.
" Here's to our forlorn hope." Courage, knight !
victory attends you.

Sir John. And laurels shall crown me. Drink away,
and be damn'd.

L. Rake. Again, boys ; t' other glass, and no mo-
rality.

Sir John. [*Drunk.*] Ay—no morality—and damn the watch. And let the constable be married.

All. Huzza!

Re-enter Page.

L. Rake. How are the streets inhabited, sirrah?

Page. My, lord, it's Sunday-night, they are full of drunken citizens.

L. Rake. Along then, boys, we shall have a feast.

Col. Along, noble knight.

Sir John. Ay—along bully; and he that says Sir John Brute is not as drunk, and as religious as the drunkenest citizen of them all—is a liar, and the son of a whore.

Col. Why, that was bravely spoke, and like a free-born Englishman.

Sir John. What's that to you, sir, whether I am an Englishman or a Frenchman?

Col. Zoons, you are not angry, sir?

Sir John. Zoons, I am angry, sir—for if I am a free-born Englishman, what have you to do, even to talk of my privileges?

L. Rake. Why, pr'ythee, knight, do n't quarrel here; leave private animosities to be decided by daylight; let the night be employed against the public enemy.

Sir John. My lord, I respect you, because you are a man of quality. But I'll make that fellow know I'm within a hair's breadth as absolute by my privileges, as the king of France is by his prerogative. He, by

his prerogative, takes money where it is not his due: I, by my privilege, refuse paying it where I owe it. Liberty and property, and old England. Huzza!

All. Huzza! [*Exit Sir John, reeling, all following.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Bed Chamber. Enter Lady BRUTE and BELINDA.

Lady Brute.

SURE it 's late, Belinda, I begin to be sleepy.

Bel. Yes, 't is near twelve. Will you go to bed?

L. Brute. To bed, my dear! And by that time I am fallen into a sweet sleep, (or perhaps a sweet dream, which is better and better) Sir John will come home roaring drunk, and be overjoyed he finds me in a condition to be disturbed.

Bel. O, you need not fear him, he 's in for all night. The servants say he 's gone to drink with my Lord Rake.

L. Brute. Nay, 't is not very likely, indeed, such suitable company should part presently. What hogs men turn to, Belinda, when they grow weary of women.

Bel. And what owls they are whilst they are fond of 'em.

L. Brute. But that we may forgive well enough, because they are so upon our accounts. But, pr'ythee, one word of poor Constant "before we go to bed, if

"it be but to furnish matter for dreams." I dare swear he's talking of me now, or thinking of me at least.

"*Bel.* So he ought, I think ; for you were pleased to make him a good round advance, to-day, madam.

"*L. Brute.* Why, I have e'en plagu'd him enough, to satisfy any reasonable woman : he has besieged me these two years to no purpose.

"*Bel.* And if he besieged you two years more, he'd be well enough paid, so he had the plundering of you at last.

"*L. Brute.* That may be ; but I'm afraid the town won't be able to hold out much longer : for, to confess the truth to you, Belinda, the garrison begins to grow mutinous.

"*Bel.* Then the sooner you capitulate, the better.

"*L. Brute.* Yet, methinks I would fain stay a little longer to see you fix'd too, that we might start together, and see who could love longest." What think you, if Heartfree should have a month's mind to you ?

"*Bel.* Why, I could almost be in love with him for despising that foolish, affected, Lady Fancyful ; " but " I am afraid he's too cold, ever to warm himself by my fire.

"*L. Brute.* Then he deserves to be frozen to death. " Would I were a man for your sake, dear rogue !

[*Kissing her.*]

"*Bel.* You'd wish yourself a woman for your own, or the men are mistaken. But if I could make a

" conquest of this son of Bacchus, and rival his bottle,
" what should I do with him? He has no fortune, I
" can 't marry him; and sure you would not have me
" do I do n't know what with him.

" *L. Brute.* Why, if you did, child; 't would be but
" a good friendly part; if 't were only to keep me in
" countenance, whilst I play the fool with Constant."

Bel. " Well, if I can 't resolve to serve you that
" way, I may perhaps some other, as much to your sa-
" tisfaction." But, pray how shall we contrive to see
these blades again quickly?

L. Brute. We must e'en have recourse to the old
way; make 'em an appointment 'twixt jest and ear-
nest; 't will look like a frolic, and that you know is a
very good thing to save a woman's blushes.

Bel. You advise well; but where shall it be?

L. Brute. In Spring-Garden. But they shan't
know their women till they pull off their masks; for a
surprize is the most agreeable thing in the world: "and
" I find myself in a very good humour, ready to do
" 'em any good turn I can think on."

Bel. Then pray write 'em the necessary billet with-
out farther delay.

L. Brute. Let's go into your chamber then, and
whilst you undress I'll do it, child.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Covent-Garden. Enter Lord RAKE, Sir JOHN, and Colonel BULLY, with their swords drawn.

L. Rake. Is the dog dead ?

Col. No, damn him, I heard him wheeze.

L. Rake. How the witch his wife howl'd.

Col. Ay, she 'll alarm the watch presently.

L. Rake. Appear, knight, then ; come, you have a good cause to fight for ; there's a man murdered.

Sir John. Is there ! then let his ghost be satisfied ; for I'll sacrifice a constable to it presently, and burn his body upon his wooden chair.

Enter a Taylor, with a bundle under his arm.

Col. How now ! what have we got here ? a thief !

Tay. No, an't please you, I 'm no thief.

L. Rake. That we 'll see presently. Here ; let the general examine him.

Sir John. Ay, ay, let me examine him, and I 'll lay a hundred pounds I find him guilty in spite of his teeth—for he looks—like a—sneaking rascal. Come, sirrah, without equivocation, or mental reservation, tell me of what opinion you are, and what calling ; for by hem—I shall guess at your morals.

Tay. An't please you, I 'm a dissenting journeyman woman's taylor.

Sir John. Then, sirrah, you love lying by your re-

ligion, and theft by your trade : and so, that your punishments may be suitable to your crimes—I 'll have you first gagg'd, and then hang'd.

Tay. Pray, good worthy gentlemen, don't abuse me : indeed I 'm an honest man, and a good workman, though I say it, that should not say it.

Sir John. No words, sirrah, but attend your fate.

L. Rake. Let me see what 's in that bundle.

Tay. An't please you, it 's my lady's short cloak and wrapping gown.

Sir John. What lady, you reptile, you ?

Tay. My Lady Brute, an't please your honour.

Sir John. My Lady Brute ! my wife ! the robe of my wife !—with reverence let me approach it. The devil's angel is always taking care of me in danger, and has sent me this suit of armour to protect me in this day of battle ;—on they go.

All. O brave knight !

L. Rake. Live, Don Quixote the second.

Sir John. Sancho, my 'squire, help me on with my armour.

Tay. O, dear gentlemen ! I shall be quite undone if you take the sack.

Sir John. Retire, sirrah ! and since you carry off your skin, go home, and be happy—So ! how do you like my shapes now ?

L. Rake. To a miracle ! he looks like a queen of the Amazons—But to your arms, gentlemen ! the enemy 's upon their march—here 's the watch.

Sir John. Oons ! if it were Alexander the Great, at

THE PROVOK'D WIFE.

S. J.



M. GARRICK as SIR JOHN BRUTE.

Sir J. Brute. *How do you like my shapes now?*

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the head of his army, I would drive him into a horse-pond.

All. Huzza ! O brave knight !

Enter Watchman.

Sir John. See ! Here he comes, with all his Greeks about him—follow me, boys.

Watch. Hey-day !—who have we got here ?—stand.

Sir John. May-hap not.

Watch. What are you all doing here in the streets at this time o' night ? And who are you, madam, that seems to be at the head of this noble crew ?

Sir John. Sirrah ! I am Bonduca, queen of the Welchmen ; and with a leek as long as my pedigree, I will destroy your Roman legions in an instant.—
Britons, strike home.

[Snatches a Watchman's staff, strikes at the Watch, and falls down, his party drove off.]

Watch. So ! we have got the queen, however ! we 'll make her pay well for her ransom.—Come, madam, will your majesty please to walk before the constable ?

Sir John. The constable 's a rascal, and you are a son of a whore !

Watch. A most noble reply, truly ! If this be her royal stile, I 'll warrant her maids of honour prattle prettily : but we 'll teach you some of our court dialect before we part with you, princess.—Away with her to the round-house.

Sir John. Hands off, you ruffians ! My honour's

F ij

dearer to me than my life ; I hope you wo n't be uncivil.

Watch. Away with her.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

A Bed Chamber. Enter HEARTFREE solus.

Heart. What the plague ails me ?—Love ! No, I thank you for that, my heart 's rock still—Yet 't is Belinda that disturbs me, that's positive—Well, what of all that ! Must I love her for being troublesome ? At that rate I might love all the women I meet, e-gad. But hold !—though I do n't love her for disturbing me, yet she may disturb me, because I love her.—Ay, that may be, faith. I have dreamt of her, that 's certain—Well, so I have of my mother ; therefore what's that to the purpose ? Ay, but Belinda runs in my mind waking—and so does many a damn'd thing, that I do n't care a farthing for—Methinks though, I would fain be talking to her, and yet I have no business—Well, am I the first man that has had a mind to do an impertinent thing ?

Enter CONSTANT.

Con. How now, Heartfree ! What makes you up and dress'd so soon ! I thought none but lovers quarrell'd with their beds ; I expected to have found you snoring, as I us'd to do ?

Heart. Why, faith, friend, 't is the care I have of your affairs, that makes me so thoughtful ; I have been studying all night how to bring your matter about with Belinda.

Con. With Belinda ?

Heart. With my lady, I mean ; and faith I have mighty hopes on 't. Sure you must be very well satisfied with her behaviour to you yesterday.

Con. So well, that nothing but a lover's fears can make me doubt of success. But what can this sudden change proceed from ?

Heart. Why, you saw her husband beat her, did you not ?

Con. That 's true : a husband is scarce to be borne upon any terms, much less when he fights with his wife. Methinks she should e'en have cuckolded him upon the spot, to shew, that after the battle she was master of the field.

Heart. A council of war of women would infallibly have advis'd her to it. But, I confess, so agreeable a woman as Belinda deserves better usage.

Con. Belinda again !

Heart. My lady, I mean. What a pox makes me blunder so to-day ? [*Aside.*] A plague of this treacherous tongue.

Con. Pr'ythee, look upon me seriously, Heartfree.—Now answer me directly ; is it my lady, or Belinda, employs your careful thoughts thus ?

Heart. My lady, or Belinda !

Con. In love, by this light ; in love.

Heart. In love !

Con. Nay, ne'er deny it ; for thou 'lt do it so awkwardly, 't will but make the jest sit heavier about thee, My dear friend, I give you much joy.

Heart. Why pr'ythee, you wo n't persuade me to it, will you ?

Con. That she's mistress of your tongue, that's plain ; and I know you are so honest a fellow, your tongue and heart always go together. But how—but how the devil ! Pha, ha, ha, ha, ha—

Heart. Hey-day ! why sure you do n't believe it in earnest.

Con. Yes, I do, because I see you deny it in jest.

Heart. Nay, but look you, Ned—a—deny in jest—a—gadzoooks, you know I say—a—when a man denies a thing in jest—a—

Con. Pha, ha, ha, ha, ha—

Heart. Nay, then we shall have it : what, because a man stumbles at a word—Did you never make a blunder ?

Con. Yes, for I am in love, I own it.

Heart. Then so am I—Now laugh, till thy soul's glutted with mirth. [*Embracing him.*] But, dear Constant, do n't tell the town on 't.

Con. Nay then, 'twere almost a pity to laugh at thee, after so honest a confession. “ But tell us a little, “ Jack, by what new invented arms has this mighty “ stroke been given ?

“ *Heart.* E'en by that unaccountable weapon called

" Je-ne-scai-quoi : for every thing that can come with-
" in the verge of beauty, I have seen it with indifference.

" *Con.* So, in a few words then ; the Je-ne-scai-quoi
" has been too hard for the quilted petticoat.

" *Heart.* I'gad, I think the Je-ne-scai-quoi is in the
" quilted petticoat ; at least 't is certain I never think
" on 't without—a—a Je-ne-scai-quoi in every part about
" me.

" *Con.* Well, but have all your remedies lost their
" virtue ? Have you turn'd her inside out yet ?

" *Heart.* I dare not so much as think on 't.

" *Con.* But do n't the two years fatigue I have had,
" discourage you ?

" *Heart.* Yes ; I dread what I foresee ; yet cannot
" quit the enterprize : like some soldiers, whose cou-
" rage dwells more in their honour than their nature,
" on they go, though the body trembles at what the
" soul makes it undertake.

" *Con.* Nay, if you expect your mistress will use
" you, as your profanations against her sex deserve, you
" tremble justly. But how do you intend to proceed,
" friend ?

" *Heart.* Thou know'st I am but a novice ; be
" friendly, and advise me.

" *Con.* Why, look you then ; I'd have you—sere-
" nade and a—write a song—go to church—look like
" a fool—be very officious ; ogle, write, and lead out :
" and who knows, but in a year or two's time, you
" may be—call'd a troublesome puppy, and sent about
" your business.

Heart. That 's hard.

Con. Yet thus it falls out with lovers, sir.

Heart. Pox on me for making one of the number.

Con. Have a care ! Say no saucy things ; 't will
" but augment your crime ; and if your mistress hears
" on 't, increase your punishment.

Heart. Pr'ythee say something then to encourage
" me ; you know I help'd you in your distress.

Con. Why then, to encourage you to perseverance,
" that you may be thoroughly ill us'd for your offen-
" ces ; I 'll put you in mind, that even the coyest ladies
" of 'em all are made up of desires, as well as we ; and
" though they do hold out a long time, they will capitulate
" late at last ; for that thundering engineer, nature,
" does make such havock in the town, they must sur-
" render at long run, or perish in their own flames."

Enter Footman.

Foot. Sir, there 's a porter without, with a letter ; he
desires to give it into your own hands.

Con. Call him in.

Enter Porter.

Con. What, Joe ! Is it thee ?

Port. An't please you, sir, I was order'd to deliver
this into your hands, by two well-shap'd ladies, at the
New Exchange. I was at your honour's lodgings, and
your servants sent me hither.

Con. 'Tis well, are you to carry any answer ?

Port. No, my noble master. They gave me my

orders, and whip they are gone, "like a maidenhead
"at fifteen."

Con. Very well ; there. [*Gives him money.*

Port. God bless your honour. [*Exit.*

Con. Now let's see what honest, trusty Joe, has
brought us. [*Reads.*

*'If you and your play-fellow can spare time from your
business and devotions, do n't fail to be at Spring-Garden
about eight in the evening. You'll find nothing there but
women, so you need bring no other arms than what you
usually carry about you.*

So, play-fellow, here's something to stay your sto-
mach, till your mistress's dish is ready for you.

Heart. Some of our old batter'd acquaintance. I
wo n't go, not I.

Con. Nay, that you ca n't avoid, there's honour in
the case ; 'tis a challenge, and I want a second.

Heart. I doubt I shall be but a very useless one to
you ; for I'm so dishearten'd by this wound Belinda
has given me, I do not think I shall have courage
enough to draw my sword.

Con. O, if that be all, come along ; I'll warrant
you'll find sword enough for such enemies as we have
to deal withal. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

*A Street. Enter Constable and Watchmen, with
Sir JOHN.*

Con. Come, forsooth, come along if you please ! I

once in compassion thought to have seen you safe home this morning ; but you have been so rampant and abusive all night, I shall see what the justice of peace will say to you.

Sir *John*. And you shall see what I'll say to the justice of peace, sirrah. [*Watchman knocks at the door*]

Enter Servant.

Con. Is Mr. Justice at home ?

Serv. Yes.

Con. Pray acquaint his worship we have got an unruly woman here, and desire to know what he'll please to have done with her.

Serv. I'll acquaint my master. [*Exit.*]

Sir *John*. Hark you, constable, what cuckoldy justice is this ?

Con. One that knows how to deal with such romps as you are, I'll warrant you.

Enter Justice.

Just. Well, Mr. Constable, what is the matter there ?

Con. An't please your worship, this here comical sort of a gentlewoman has committed great outrages to-night. She has been frolicking with my Lord Rake and his gang ; they attacked the watch, and I hear there has been a man kill'd. I believe 't is they have done it.

Sir *John*. Sir, there may have been murder for aught I know ; and 't is a great mercy there has not been a rape too—that fellow would have ravished me.

1st Watch. Ravish ! ravish ! O lud ! O lud ! O lud ! ravish her ! Why, please your worship, I heard Mr. Constable say he believed she was little better than a maphrodite.

Just. Why, truly, she does seem a little masculine about the mouth.

2d Watch. Yes, and about the hands too, an't please your worship. I did but offer, in mere civility, to help her up the steps into our apartment, and with her gripen fists thus—— [Sir John knocks him down.

Sir John. Ay, just so, sir, I fell'd him to the ground, like an ox.

Just. Out upon this boisterous woman ! out upon her !

Sir John. Mr. Justice, he would have been uncivil ; it was in defence of my honour, and I demand satisfaction.

2d Watch. I hope your worship will satisfy her honour in Bridewell ; that fist of her's will make an admirable hemp-beater.

Sir John. Sir, I hope you will protect me against that libidinous rascal. I am a woman of quality and virtue too, for all I am in an undress this morning.

Just. Why, she really has the air of a sort of a woman, a little somethingish out of the common. Madam, if you expect I should be favourable to you, I desire I may know who you are.

Sir John. Sir, I am any body, at your service.

Just. Lady, I desire to know your name.

Sir John. Sir, my name's Mary.

Just. Ay, but your surname, madam.

Sir John. Sir, my surname 's the very same with my husband's.

Just. A strange woman this ! Who is your husband, pray ?

Sir John. Sir John——

Just. Sir John who ?

Sir John. Sir John Brute.

Just. Is it possible, madam, you can be my Lady Brute ?

Sir John. That happy woman, sir, am I ; only a little in my merriment to-night.

Just. I am concern'd for Sir John.

Sir John. Truly, so am I.

Just. I have heard he 's an honest gentleman.

Sir John. As ever drank.

Just. Good lack ! Indeed, lady, I 'm sorry he has such a wife.

Sir John. I am sorry he has any wife at all.

Just. And so perhaps may he—I doubt you have not given him a very good taste of matrimony.

Sir John. Taste, sir ! Sir, I have scorn'd to stint him to a taste, I have given him a full meal of it.

Just. Indeed, I believe so ! But pray, fair lady, may he have given you any occasion for this extraordinary conduct—does he not use you well ?

Sir John. A little upon the rough sometimes.

Just. Ay, any man may be out of humour now and then.

Sir John. Sir, I love peace and quiet, and when a

woman do n't find that at home, she 's apt sometimes to comfort herself with a few innocent diversions abroad.

Just. I doubt he uses you but too well. Pray how does he as to that weighty thing, money ? Does he allow you what is proper of that ?

Sir John. Sir, I have generally enough to pay the reckoning, if this son of a whore of a drawer would but bring his bill.

Just. A strange woman this—Does he spend a reasonable portion of his time at home, to the comfort of his wife and children ?

Sir John. He never gave his wife cause to repine at his being abroad in his life.

Just. Pray, madam, how may he be in the grand matrimonial point.—Is he true to your bed ?

Sir John. Chaste ! Oons ! This fellow asks so many impertinent questions ! E'gad I believe it is the justice's wife, in the justice's clothes.

Just. 'T is a great pity he should have been thus dispos'd of. Pray, madam (and then I have done) what may be your ladyship's common method of life ? If I may presume so far.

Sir John. Why, sir, much that of a woman of quality.

Just. Pray, how may you generally pass your time, madam ? Your morning, for example.

Sir John. Sir, like a woman of quality—I wake about two o'clock in the afternoon—I stretch and make a sign for my chocolate—When I have drank

three cups, I slide down again upon my back, with my arms over my head, while my two maids put on my stockings—Then, hanging upon their shoulders, I am trail'd to my great chair, where I sit, and yawn for my breakfast—If it do n't come presently, I lie down upon my couch to say my prayers, while my maid reads me the play-bills.

Just. Very well, madam.

Sir John. When the tea is brought in, I drink twelve regular dishes, with eight slices of bread and butter—And half an hour after, I send to the cook, to know if the dinner is almost ready.

Just. So, madam!

Sir John. By that time my head is half drest, I hear my husband swearing himself into a state of perdition, that the meat's all cold upon the table; to amend which, I come down in an hour more, and have it sent back to the kitchen, to be all drest over again.

Just. Poor man!

Sir John. When I have din'd, and my idle servants are presumptuously set down at their ease, to do so too, I call for my coach, to go visit fifty dear friends, of whom I hope I never shall find one at home, while I shall live.

Just. So! there's the morning and afternoon pretty well dispos'd of—Pray how, madam, do you pass your evenings?

Sir John. Like a woman of spirit, sir; a great spirit. Give me a box and dice—Seven's the main, oons! Sir, I set you a hundred pound! Why, do you

women are married now a-days, to sit at home and napkins ! Oh, the lord help your head !

. Mercy upon us, Mr. Constable ! What will e come to ?

What will it come to, indeed, if such women e are not set in the stocks !

John. Sir, I have a little urgent business calls me ; and therefore I desire the favour of you to matters to a conclusion.

. Madam, if I were sure that business were not omit more disorders, I would release you.

John. None——by my virtue.

. Then, Mr. Constable, you may discharge her.

John. Sir, your very humble servant. If you to accept of a bottle——

. I thank you kindly, madam ; But I never in a morning. Good-by-t' ye, madam, good-by-

John. Good-by-t' ye, good sir. [*Exit Justice.*
w, Mr. Constable, shall you and I go pick up a together ?

. No, thank you, madam ; my wife 's enough to any reasonable man.

John. [*Aside.*] He, he, he, he—the fool is ed then. Well, you wo n't go !

. Not I, truly.

John. Then I 'll go by myself ; and you and your ay go to the devil. [*Exit.*

. [*Gazing after her.*] Why, God-a-mercy, lady.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Spring-Garden. CONSTANT and HEARTFREE cross the Stage. As they go off, enter Lady FANCYFUL and MADEMOISELLE mask'd, and dogging them.

Con. So ; I think we are about the time appointed, let us walk up this way. [*Exeunt.*]

L. Fan. Good : thus far I have dogg'd 'em without being discover'd. 'Tis infallibly some intrigue that brings them to Spring-Garden. How my poor heart is torn and wrack'd with fear and jealousy ! Yet let it be any thing but that flirt Belinda, and I'll try to bear it. But if it proves her, all that's woman in me shall be employ'd to destroy her.

[*Exit after Constant and Heartfree.*]

Re-enter CONSTANT and HEARTFREE. Lady FANCYFUL and MADEMOISELLE still following at a distance.

Con. I see no females yet, that have any thing to say to us. I'm afraid we are banter'd.

Heart. I wish we were, for I'm in no humour to make either them or myself merry.

Con. Nay, I'm sure you'll make them merry enough, " if I tell 'em why you are dull. But pr'y-
" thee, why so heavy and sad before you begin to be
" ill-us'd ?

" *Heart.* For the same reason, perhaps, that you are

“so brisk and well pleas’d ; because both pains and
“pleasures are generally more considerable in pros-
“pect, than when they come to pass.”

*Enter Lady BRUTE and BELINDA, masked, and poorly
dressed.*

Con. How now ! who are these ? Not our game, I
hope.

Heart. If they are, we are e’en well enough serv’d,
to come a hunting here, when we had so much better
game in chase elsewhere.

L. Fan. [*To Mademoiselle.*] So, those are their ladies,
without doubt. But I ’m afraid that Doiley stuff is not
worn for want of better clothes. They are the very
shape and size of Belinda and her aunt.

Madem. So dey be inteed, matam.

L. Fan. We ’ll slip into this close harbour, where
we may hear all they say.

[*Exeunt Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle.*]

L. Brute. What, are you afraid of us, gentlemen ?

Heart. Why, truly I think we may, if appearances
do n’t lie.

Bel. Do you always find women what they appear to
be, sir ?

Heart. No, forsooth ; but I seldom find ’em better
than they appear to be.

Bel. Then the outside ’s best, you think ?

Heart. ’T is the honestest.

Con. Have a care, Heartfree ; you are relapsing again.

L. Brute. Why, does the gentleman use to rail women ?

Con. He has done formerly.

Bel. I suppose he had very good call for 't. Th' did not use you so well, as you thought you deserv sir.

L. Brute. They made themselves merry at your pence, sir ?

Bel. Laugh'd when you sigh'd ?

L. Brute. Slept while you were waking ?

Bel. Had your porter beat ?

L. Brute. And threw your billet-doux in the fire.
Heart. Hey-day, I shall do more than rail, sently.

Bel. Why, you wo n't beat us, will you ?

Heart. I do n't know but I may.

Con. What the devil 's coming here ? Sir John-drunk, i' faith.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. What a pox——here 's Constant, H free—and two whores e'gad—O, you covetous rog —What, have you ne'er a spare punk for your fri But I 'll share with you.

Heart. Why, what the plague have you been a knight ?

[*He seizes both the w*

Sir John. Why, I have been beating the watch scandalizing the women of quality.

Heart. A very good account, truly.

Sir John. And what do you think I 'll do next

Con. Nay, that no man can guess.

Sir John. Why, if you 'll let me sup with you, I 'll treat both your strumpets.

L. Brute. [*Aside.*] O lord ! we are undone.

Heart. No, we can 't sup together, because we have some affairs elsewhere. But if you 'll accept of these two ladies, we 'll be so complaisant to you, to resign our right in 'em.

"*Bel.* [*Aside.*] Lord, what shall we do ?"

Sir John. Let me see, their clothes are such damn'd clothes, they wo n't pawn for the reckoning.

Heart. Sir John, your servant. Raptures attend you.

Con. Adieu, ladies, make much of the gentleman.

L. Brute. Why, sure you won't leave us in the hands of a drunken fellow to abuse us.

Sir John. Who do you call a drunken fellow, you slut you ? I 'm a man of quality ; the king has made me a knight.

Heart. Aye, aye, you are in good hands ; adieu, adieu. [*Runs off.*]

L. Brute. The devil's hands ! Let me go, or I 'll—
For Heaven's sake protect us.

[*She breaks from him, runs to Constant, twitching off her mask, and clapping it on again.*]

Sir John. I 'll devil you, you jade you. I 'll demolish your ugly face.

Re-enter HEARTFREE. BELINDA runs to him and
shews her face.

Heart. Hold, thou mighty man ! Look ye, sir, we

did but jest with you. These are ladies of our acquaintance that we had a mind to frighten a little, but now you must leave us.

Sir John. Oons, I wo n't leave you, not I.

Heart. Nay but you must though ; and therefore make no words on 't.

Sir John Then you are a couple of damn'd uncivil fellows—And I hope your punks will give you sauce to your mutton. [Exit.

L. Brute. Oh, I shall never come to myself again, I 'm so frighten'd !

Con. 'T is a narrow 'scape, indeed.

Bel. Women must have frolicks, you see, whatever they cost 'em.

Heart. This might have prov'd a dear one though.

L. Brute. You are the more obliged to us for the risk we run upon your accounts.

Con. And I hope you 'll acknowledge something due to our knight-errantry, ladies. This is the second time we have deliver'd you.

L. Brute. 'T is true ; and since we see fate has design'd you for our guardians, 't will make us the more willing to trust ourselves in your hands. But you must not have the worse opinion of us for our innocent frolick.

Heart. Ladies, you may command our opinions in every thing that is to your advantage.

Bel. Then, sir, I command you to be of opinion that women are sometimes better than they appear to be. [L. Brute and Constant talk apart.

Heart. Madam, you have made a convert of me in every thing. I'm grown a fool. I could be fond of a woman.

Bel. I thank you, sir, in the name of the whole sex.

Heart. Which sex nothing but yourself could ever have aton'd for.

Bel. Now has my vanity a devilish itch to know in what my merit consists.

Heart. In your humility, madam, that keeps you ignorant it consists at all.

Bel. One other compliment, with that serious face, and I hate you for ever after.

Heart. Some women love to be abus'd : is that it you would be at ?

Bel. No, not that neither : but I'd have men talk plainly what 's fit for women to hear, without putting 'em to a real or an affected blush.

Heart. Why then, in as plain terms as I can find to express myself, I could love you even to matrimony if almost, I'gad.

Bel. Just as Sir John did her ladyship there—"What think you ? Do n't you believe one month's time might bring you down to the same indifference, only in a little better manner, perhaps ? Well, you men are unaccountable things, mad till you have your mistresses, and then stark mad till you are rid of 'em again. Tell me honestly, is not your patience to a much severer trial after possession than before ?

Heart. With a great many, I must confess it is,

“to our eternal scandal; but I”—dear creature, do but try me.

Bel. That 's the surest way indeed to know, but not the safest. [*To Lady Brute.*] Madam, are you not for taking a turn in the great walk? It 's almost dark, nobody will know us.

L. Brute. Really I find myself something idle, Belinda: besides I doat upon this little odd private corner. But do n't let my lazy fancy confine you.

Con. [*Aside.*] So she would be left alone with me; that's well.

Bel. Well, we 'll take one turn, and come to you again. [*To Heartfree.*] Come, sir, shall we go pry into the secrets of the garden? Who knows what discoveries we may make.

Heart. Madam, I am at your service.

Con. [*To Heartfree, aside.*] Do n't make too much haste back; for, d'ye hear——“I may be busy.”

Heart. Enough. [*Exeunt Belinda, and Heartfree.*]

L. Brute. Sure you think me scandalously free, Mr. Constant, I 'm afraid I shall lose your good opinion of me.

Con. My good opinion, madam, is like your cruelty, never to be remov'd.

L. Brute. Indeed I doubt you much. Why, suppose you had a wife, and she should entertain a gallant?

Con. If I gave her just cause, how should I justly condemn her?

L. Brute. Ah; but you differ widely about just causes.

Con. But blows can bear no dispute.

L. Brute. Nor ill-manners much, truly.

Con. Then no woman upon earth has so just a cause as you have.

" *L. Brute.* But can a husband's faults release my duty ?

" *Con.* In equity, without doubt. And where laws dispense with equity, equity should dispense with laws.

" *L. Brute.* Pray let us leave this dispute ; for you men have as much witchcraft in your arguments, as women have in their eyes.

" *Con.* But whilst you attack me with your charms, 't is but reasonable I assault you with mine.

" *L. Brute.* The case is not the same. What mischief we do we can't help, and therefore are to be forgiven.

" *Con.* Beauty soon obtains pardon for the pain that it gives, when it applies the balm of compassion to the wound : but a fine face and a hard heart is almost as bad as an ugly face and a soft one ; both very troublesome to many a poor gentleman.

" *L. Brute.* Yes, and to many a poor gentlewoman too, I can assure you. But pray, which of 'em is it that most afflicts you ?

" *Con.* Your glass and conscience will inform you, madam." But for Heaven's sake (for now I must be serious) if pity, or if gratitude can move you, [*Taking her hand.*] if constancy and truth have power to tempt you : if love, if adoration can affect you,

give me at least some hopes, that time may do, what you perhaps mean never to perform ; 't will ease my sufferings, though not quench my flame.

L. *Brute*. Your sufferings eas'd, your flame would soon abate : and that I would preserve, not quench it, sir.

Con. Would you preserve it, nourish it with favours ; for that 's the food it naturally requires.

L. *Brute*. Yet on that natural food 't would surfeit soon, should I resolve to grant all you would ask.

Con. And in refusing all, you starve it. Forgive me, therefore, since my hunger rages, if I at last grow wild, and in my frenzy force at least this from you. [*Kissing her hand.*] Or if you 'd have my flame soar higher still, then grant me this, and this, and thousands more ; [*Kissing first her hand, and then her neck.*] [*Aside.*] For now 's the time she melts into compassion.

L. *Brute*. O Heavens ! Let me go.

Con. Ay, go, ay : where shall we go, my charming angel—into this private harbour—Nay, let 's lose no time—moments are precious—

L. *Brute*. And lovers wild. Pray let us stop here ; at least for this time.

Con. 'T is impossible ; he that has power over you, can have none over himself.

[*As he is forcing her into the barbour, Lady Fancyful and Mademoiselle bolt out upon them, and run over the stage.*]

L. *Brute*. Ah ! I 'm lost.

L. *Fan*. Fe, fe, fe, fe, fe.

Madem. Fe, fe, fe, fe, fe.

Con. Death and furies, who are these?

L. Brute. O Heavens! I'm out of my wits: if they know me, I am ruin'd.

Con. Do n't be frightened: ten thousand to one they are strangers to you.

L. Brute. Whatever they are, I won't stay here a moment longer.

Con. Whither will you go!

L. Brute. Home, as if the devil were in me. Lord, where 's this Belinda now?

Enter BELINDA and HEARTFREE.

O! 't is well you are come; I'm so frighten'd, "my hair stands an end." Let 's begone, for Heaven's sake.

Bel. Lord, what 's the matter?

L. Brute. The devil 's the matter; here 's a couple of women have done the most impertinent thing. Away, away, away, away, away. [*Exeunt running.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Lady Fancyful's House. Enter Lady FANCYFUL and MADEMOISELLE.

Lady Fancyful.

WELL, Mademoiselle; did you dodge the filthy things?

H

Madem. O que ouy, Madame.

L. Fan. And where are they ?

Madem. Au logis.

L. Fan. What, men and all ?

Madem. Tous ensemble.

L. Fan. O confidence ! What, carry their fellows
to their own house !

Madem. C'est que le mari n'y est pas.

L. Fan. No, so I believe, truly. But he shall be
there, and quickly too, if I can find him out. Well,
't is a prodigious thing, to see when men and women
get together, how they fortify one another in their im-
pudence. But if that drunken fool, her husband, be
to be found in e'er a tavern in town, I'll send him
amongst 'em ; I'll spoil their sport..

Madem. En vérité, Madame, ce seroit damage.

L. Fan. 'T is in vain to oppose it, Mademoiselle ;
therefore never go about it. For I am the steadiest
creature in the world—when I am determined to do
mischief. So, come along. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

*Sir John Brute's House. Enter CONSTANT, HEART-
FREE, Lady BRUTE, BELINDA, and LOVEWELL.*

L. Brute. But are you sure you do n't mistake,
Lovewell ?

Love. Madam, I saw 'em all go into the tavern
together, and my master so drunk he could scarce
stand.

L. Brute. Then, gentlemen, I believe we may venture to let you stay, and play at cards with us an hour or two ; for they 'll scarce part till morning.

Bel. I think 't is pity they should ever part.

Con. The company that 's here, madam.

L. Brute. Then, sir, the company that 's here must remember to part itself in time.

Con. Madam, we do n't intend to forfeit your future favours, by an indiscreet usage of this. The moment you give us the signal, we sha n't fail to make our retreat.

L. Brute. Upon those conditions then let us sit down to cards.

Enter LOVEWELL.

Low. O lord, madam ! here's my master just staggering in upon you ; he has been quarrelsome yonder, and they have kicked him out of the company.

L. Brute. Into the closet, gentlemen, for heaven's sake ; I 'll wheedle him to-bed, if possible.

[Constant and Heartfree run into the closet.]

Enter Sir JOHN, all dirt and bloody.

L. Brute. Ah——Ah——he 's all over blood.

Sir John. What the plague does the woman squall for ? Did you never see a man in pickle before ?

L. Brute. Lord, where have you been ?

Sir John. I have been at—cuffs.

L. Brute. I fear that is not all. I hope you are not wounded.

Sir John. Sound as a roach, wife.

L. Brute. I'm mighty glad to hear it.

Sir John. You know—I think you lie.

L. Brute. You do me wrong to think so—for Heaven's my witness, I had rather see my own blood trickle down, than yours.

Sir John. Then will I be sacrificed.

L. Brute. 'T is a hard fate I should not be believ

Sir John. 'T is a damned atheistical age, wife.

L. Brute. I am sure I have given you a thousand tender proofs how great my care is of you. But, of all your cruel thoughts, I still persist; and at present moment, if I can, persuade you to lie down and sleep a little.

Sir John. Why—do you think I am drunk, slut you?

L. Brute. Heaven forbid I should: but I'm afraid you are feverish. Pray let me feel your pulse.

Sir John. Stand off, and be damp'd.

L. Brute. Why, I see your distemper in your eyes. You are all on fire. Pray go to bed; let me inspect you.

Sir John. Come—kiss me, then.

L. Brute. [*Kissing him.*] There: now go. [*As he goes.*] He stinks like poison.

Sir John. I see it goes damnably against my stomach—and therefore—kiss me again.

L. Brute. Nay, now you fool me,

Sir John. Do't, I say.

L. Brute. [*Aside.*] Ah, lord have mercy upon me. Well: there:—Now will you go?

Sir John. Now, wife, you shall see my gratitude. You gave me two kisses—I'll give you—two hundred. [*Kisses and tumbles her.*]

L. Brute. O lord! pray, Sir John, be quiet. Heavens! what a pickle am I in.

"Bel. [*Aside.*] If I were in her pickle, I'd call my "gallant out of the closet, and he should cudgel him "soundly."

Sir John. So, now you being as dirty and as nasty as myself, we may go pig together. But first I must have a cup of your cold tea, wife. [*Going to the closet.*]

L. Brute. O, I'm ruined!—There's none there, my dear.

Sir John. I'll warrant you I'll find some, my dear.

L. Brute. You can't open the door, the lock's spoiled; I have been turning and turning the key this half hour to no purpose. I'll send for the smith to-morrow.

Sir John. There's ne'er a smith in Europe can open a door with more expedition than I can do.—As for example—pou. [*He bursts open the door with his foot.*]—How now! what the devil have we got here?—Constant—Heartfree—and two whores again, egad. This is the worst cold tea—that ever I met with in my life.

Enter CONSTANT and HEARTFREE.

L. Brute. [*Aside.*] O lord, what will become of us?

Sir *John*. Gentlemen—I am your very humble servant—I give you many thanks—I see you take care of my family—I shall do all I can to return the obligation.

Con. Sir, how oddly soever this business may appear to you, you 'd have no cause to be uneasy if you knew the truth of all things. Your lady is the most virtuous woman in the world, and nothing has past, but an innocent frolic.

Heart. Nothing else, upon my honour, sir.

Sir *John*. You are both very civil gentlemen—and my wife, there, is a very civil gentlewoman; therefore I do n't doubt but many civil things have past between you.—Your very humble servant.

L. Brute. [*Aside to Con.*] Pray begone; he's so drunk he can't hurt us to-night, and to-morrow morning you shall hear from us.

Con. I'll obey you, madam.—Sir, when you are cool, you'll understand reason better. So then I shall take the pains to inform you. If not, I wear a sword, sir, and so good-bye t'ye. Come along, Heartfree.

[*Exeunt*,

Sir *John*. Wear a sword, sir—And what of all that, sir? He comes to my house; eats my meat; lies with my wife; dishonours my family; gets a bastard to inherit my estate—And when I ask a civil account of all this—Sir, says he, I wear a sword—Wear a sword, sir?—Yes, sir, says he, I wear a sword.—It may be a good answer at cross purposes; but 't is a damned one to a man in my whimsical circumstances—Sir, says he, I wear a sword—[*To Lady Brute.*] And





THE PROVOK'D WIFE.

*L.B. So, thanks to kind Heaven, he's fast
for some hours.*

ACT V.

SC. 2.

What do you wear now? Ha! tell me. [*Sitting down in a chair.*—What, you are modest, and can't—
—then I'll tell you, you slut you. You wear—
—impudent lewd face—A damn'd designing heart—
—a tail—and a tail full of——

[*He falls fast asleep, snoring.*]

L. Brute. So, thanks to kind Heaven, he's fast for some hours.

Bel. 'T is well he is so, that we may have time to tell our story handsomely; for we must lie like the devil to bring ourselves off.

L. Brute. What shall we say, Belinda?

Bel. [*Musing.*—I'll tell you: it must all light upon Heartfree and I. We'll say he has courted me some time, but for reasons unknown to us, has ever been very earnest the thing might be kept from Sir John. That therefore hearing him upon the stairs, he run into the closet, though against our will, and Constant with him, to prevent jealousy. And to give this a good impudent face of truth, (that I may deliver you from the trouble you are in) I'll e'en, if he pleases, marry him.

L. Brute. I'm beholden to you, cousin; but that would be carrying the jest a little too far, for your own sake: you know he's a younger brother, and has nothing.

Bel. 'T is true: but I like him, and have fortune enough to keep above extremity: I can't say I would live with him in a cell, upon love and bread and butter: but I'd rather have the man I love and a

middle state of life, than that gentleman in the chair there, and twice your ladyship's splendour.

L. Brute. In truth, niece, you are in the right on't: but 't is late: let's end our discourse for to-night, and out of an excess of charity, take a small care of that nasty drunken thing there—Do but look at him, Belinda.

Bel. Ah—— 't is a savoury dish.

L. Brute. As savoury as 't is, I'm cloy'd with it. Pr'ythee call the butler to take away.

Bel. Call the butler!—call the scavenger. [*To a Servant within.*] Who's there?—Call Razor; let him take away his master; scour him clean with a little soap and sand, and so put him to-bed.

L. Brute. Come, Belinda, I'll e'en lie with you to-night, and in the morning we'll send for our gentlemen to set this matter even.

Bel. With all my heart.

L. Brute. Good-night, my dear.

[*Making a low curtsy to Sir John.*]

Both. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter RASOR.

Razor. My lady there's a wag—my master there's a cuckold. Marriage is a slippery thing—Women have depraved appetites—My lady's a wag—I have heard all; I have seen all; I understand all, and I'll tell all—for my little Frenchwoman loves news dearly. This story will gain her heart, or nothing will. [*To his master.*] Come, sir, your head's too full of fumes

at present, to make room for your jealousy ; but I reckon we shall have rare work with you, when your pate's empty. Come to your kennel, you cuckoldy, drunken sot, you. *[Carries him on his back.*

My master's asleep, in his chair, and a snoring!

My lady's abroad, and—Oh rare matrimony!

[Exit.

SCENE III.

Lady Fancyful's House. Enter Lady FANCYFUL and
MADemoisELLE.

L. Fan. But why did not you tell me before, Mademoiselle, that Razor and you were fond?

Madem. De modesty hinder me, matam.

L. Fan. Why, truly modesty does often hinder us from doing things we have an extravagant mind to. But does he love you well enough yet, to do any thing you bid him? Do you think, to oblige you, he would speak scandal?

Madem. Matam, to oblige your ladyship, he shall speak any thing.

L. Fan. Why then, Mademoiselle, I'll tell you what you shall do. You shall engage him to tell his master all that passed at Spring-Garden. I have a mind he should know what a wife and a niece he has got.

Madem. Il le fera, madame,

Enter a Footman, who speaks to Mademoiselle apart.

Foot. Mademoiselle, yonder 's Mr. Razor desires to speak with you.

Madem. Tell him I come presently. [*Exit Footman.*—Razor be dere, matam.

L. Fan. That 's fortunate : Well, I 'll leave you together ; and, if you find him stubborn, Mademoiselle—hark you—do n't refuse him a few reasonable little liberties to put him in humour.

Madem. Laissez moi faire. [*Exit L. Fan.*

Razor peeps in ; and seeing Lady Fanciful gone, turns to Mademoiselle, takes her about the neck, and kisses her.

Madem. How now, confidence !

Razor. How now, modesty !

Madem. Who make you so familiar, sirrah ?

Razor. My impudence, hussy.

Madem. Stand off, rouge-face.

Razor. Ah, Mademoiselle—great news at our house.

Madem. Why, vat be de matter ?

Razor. The matter !—why, uptails all 's the matter.

Madem. Tu te mocque de moi.

Razor. Now do you long to know the particulars—the time when—the place where—the manner how ; but I won't tell you a word more.

Madem. Nay, den dou kill me, Razor.

Razor. Come, kiss me, then.

Madem. Nay, pridee tell me.

[*Clapping his hands behind.*

Razor. Good bye t' ye.

[*Going.*

Madem. Hold, hold—I will kiss dee. [*Kissing him.*

Razor. So, that's civil:—Why now, my pretty Poll—my goldfinch—my little waterwagtail, you must know that—Come, kiss me again.

Madem. I wo n't kiss de no more.

Razor. Good-bye-t' ye.

[*Going.*

Madem. Doucement ; dere ; es tu content ?

[*Kissing him.*

Razor. So : now I'll tell thee all. Why, the news is, that cuckoldom in folio is newly printed, and matrimony in quarto is just going into the press. Will you buy any books, Mademoiselle ?

Madem. Tu parle comme un libraire ; de devil, no understand dee.

Razor. Why then, that I may make myself intelligible to a waiting-woman, I'll speak like a valet de chambre. My lady has cuckolded my master.

Madem. Bon.

Razor. Which we take very ill from her hands, I can tell her that. We can't yet prove matter of fact upon her.

Madem. N'importe.

Razor. But we can prove that matter of fact had like to have been upon her.

Madem. Ouy-da.

Razor. For we have such terrible circumstances.

Madem. Sans doute.

Razor. That any man of parts may draw tickling conclusions from 'em.

Madem. Fort bien.

Razor. We found a couple of tight well-built gentlemen stuf into her ladyship's closet.

Madem. Le diable !

Razor. And I, in my particular person, have discovered a "most damnable" plot, how to persuade my poor master, that all this hide and seek, this Will in the Wisp, has no other meaning than a christian marriage for sweet Mrs. Belinda.

Madem. Une marriage ? Ah, les droless.

Razor. Do n't you interrupt me, hussy ; 't is agreed, I say ; and my innocent lady, to wriggle herself out at the backdoor of the business, turns marriage-bawd to her niece, and resolves to deliver up her fair body to be tumbled and mumbled by that young liquorish whipster, Heartfree. Now are you satisfied ?

Madem. No.

Razor. Right woman—always gaping for more.

Madem. Dis be all den, dat you know ?

Razor. All !—Ay, and a great deal too, I think.

Madem. Dou be fool, dou know nothing.—Ecoute, mon pauvre Razor.—Dou sees des two eyes ? Des two eyes have see de devil.

Razor. The woman's mad.

Madem. In Spring Garden, dat rogue Constant meet dy lady.

Razor. Bon.

Madem. ——I 'll tell dee no more.

Razor. Nay, pr'ythee, my swan.

Madem. Come, kiss me, den.

[Clapping her hands behind her, as he did before.]

Razor. I wo n't kiss you, not I.

Madem. Adieu.

[Going.]

Razor. Hold—Now proceed. [Gives her a hearty kiss.]

Madem. A ça—I hide myself in one cunning place, where I hear all, and see all. First dy drunken master come mal à propos ; but de sot no know his own dear wife, so he leave her to her sport.—Den de game begin. De lover say soft ting ; de lady look upon de ground. [As she speaks, Razor still acts the man, and she the womane] He take her by de hand : she turn her head on oder way. Den he squeeze very hard : den she pull—very softly. Den he take her in his arms : den she give him littel pat. “ Den he kiss her “ tettons. Den she say—pish, nay fie.” Den he tremble : den she sigh. Den he pull her into de harbour : den she pinch him.

Razor. Ay, but not so hard, you baggage you.

Madem. Den he grow bold : she grow weake ; he tro her down, il tombe dessus, le diable assist, il emport tout ;—[Razor struggles with her, as if he would throw her down.]—stand off, sirrah.

Razor. You have set me a-fire, you jade, you.

Madem. Den go to de river and quench dyself.

Razor. What an unnatural harlot this !

Madem. Razor. [Looking languishingly on him.]

Razor. Mademoiselle.

Madem. Dou no love me ?

Rasor. Not love thee!—More than a Frenchman does soup.

Madem. Den you will refuse nothing dat I bid dee?

Rasor. Do n't bid me hang myself then.

Madem. No, only tell dy master all, I have tell dee of dy laty.

Rasor. Why, you little malicious strumpet, you—should you like to be served so?

Madem. Dou dispute den?—Adieu.

Rasor. Hold—But why wilt thou make me be such a rouge, my dear?

Madem. Voilà un vrai Anglois! il est amoureux, et cependant il veut raisonner. Va t'en au diable.

Rasor. Hold, once more:—in hopes thou 'lt give me up thy body, I 'll make a present of my honesty.

Madem. Bon, écoute donc; if dou fail me—I never see dee more. If dou obey me—Je m'abandonne à toy à toy. [*She takes him about the neck, and gives him a smacking kiss.*]

[*Exit Mademoiselle.*]

Rasor. [*Licking his lips.*] Not be a rogue!—*Amor vincit omnia.*

[*Exit Rasor.*]

Enter Lady FANCYFUL and MADEMOISELLE.

L. Fan. Marry, say ye! Will the two things marry?

Madem. On le va faire, madame.

L. Fan. Look you, Mademoiselle—in short, I can't bear it—no, I find I can't. If once I see 'em a-bed together, I shall have ten thousand thoughts in my head, will make me run distracted. Therefore, run

and call Rasor back immediately, for something must be done to stop this impertinent wedding. If I can but defer it four and twenty hours I'll make such work about town, with that little pert slut's reputation, he shall as soon marry a witch.

Madem. [*Aside.*] La voilà bien intentionnée. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Constant's Lodgings. *Enter* CONSTANT *and* HEART-FREE.

Con. But what dost think will become of this business?

Heart. 'Tis easier to think what will not become on 't.

Con. What 's that?

Heart. A challenge. I know the knight too well for that; his dear body will always prevail upon his noble soul to be quiet.

Con. But though he dare not challenge me, perhaps he may venture to challenge his wife.

Heart. Not if you whisper him in the ear, you won't have him do 't, and there's no other way left that I see. For, as drunk as he was, he'll remember you and I were where we should not be; and I don't think him quite blockhead enough yet, to be persuaded we were got into his wife's closet only to peep into her prayer-book.

Enter a Servant with a letter.

Serv. Sir, here 's a letter—a porter brought it.

Con. O ho, here 's instructions for us. [*Reads.*

' The accident that has happen'd has touch'd our invention to the quick. We would fain come off without your help; but find that 's impossible. In a word, the whole business must be thrown upon a matrimonial intrigue between your friend and mine. But if the parties are not fond enough to go quite through with the matter, 't is sufficient for our turn, they own the design. We 'll find pretences enough to break the match. Adieu.'

—Well, women for invention! How long would my blockhead have been producing this! Hey, Heart-free! What, musing, man! Pr'ythee be chearful. What say'st thou, friend, to this matrimonial remedy?

Heart. Why, I say, it 's worse than the disease.

Con. Here 's a fellow for you, There 's beauty and money on her side, and love up to the ears on his; and yet—

Heart. And yet, I think, I may reasonably be allow'd to boggle at marrying the niece, in the very moment that you are deluding the aunt.

Con. Why, truly, there may be something in that. But have not you a good opinion enough of your own parts, to believe you could keep a wife to yourself?

Heart. I shou'd have, if I had a good opinion enough of hers, to believe she could do as much by me. But pr'ythee advise me in this good and evil,

this life and death, this blessing and curse, that is set before me. "For to do 'em right, after all, the wife "seldom rambles, till the husband shews her the way.

"*Con.* 'T is true, a man of real worth scarce ever "is a cuckold, but by his own fault. Women are "not naturally lewd; there must be something to "urge 'em to it. They'll cuckold a churl, out of "revenge; a fool, because they despise him; a beast, "because they loath him. But when they make bold "with a man they once had a well-grounded value "for, 't is because they first see themselves neglected "by him."

Heart. Shall I marry or die a maid?

Con. Why faith, Heartfree, matrimony is like an army going to engage. Love 's the forlorn hope, which is soon cut off; the marriage knot is the main body, which may stand buff a long long time; and repentance is the rear guard, which rarely gives ground, as long as the main body has a being.

Heart. Conclusion then; you advise me to rake on as you do.

Con. That 's not concluded yet. For though marriage be a lottery, in which there are wondrous many blanks; yet there is one inestimable lot, in which the only heaven on earth is written. Would your kind fate but guide your hand to that, though I were wrap'd in all that luxury itself could clothe me with, I should envy you.

Heart. And justly too; for to be capable of loving

one, doubtless, is better than to possess a thousand. But how far that capacity's in me, alas, I know not!

Con. But you would know.

Heart. I would so.

Con. Matrimony will inform you. Come, one flight of resolution carries you to the land of experience; where in a very moderate time you'll know the capacity of your soul and your body both, or I'm mistaken.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Sir John Brute's House. Enter Lady BRUTE and BELINDA.

Bel. Well, madam, what answer have you from 'em?

L. Brute. That they'll be here this moment. I fancy 't will end in a wedding: I'm sure he's a fool if it do n't. Ten thousand pounds, and such a lass as you are, is no contemptible offer to a younger brother. "But are not you under strange agitations? Pr'ythee, how does your pulse beat?"

"*Bel.* High and low, I have much a-do to be valiant: is it not very strange to go to bed with a man?"

"*L. Brute.* Um—it is a little odd at first, but it will soon grow easy to you."

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Good morrow, gentlemen: how have you slept after your adventure?

Heart. Some careful thoughts, ladies, on your accounts, have kept us waking.

Bel. And some careful thoughts on your own, I believe, have hindered you from sleeping. Pray how does this matrimonial project relish with you?

Heart. Why, faith, e'en as storming towns does with soldiers, where the hopes of delicious plunder banishes the fear of being knock'd on the head.

Bel. Is it then possible, after all, that you dare think of downright lawful wedlock?

Heart. Madam, you have made me so fool-hardy, I dare do any thing.

Bel. Then, sir, I challenge you, and matrimony's the spot where I expect you.

Heart. 'Tis enough; I'll not fail. [*Aside.*] So, now I am in for Hobbe's voyage; a great leap in the dark.

L. Brute. Well, gentlemen, this matter being concluded, then, have you got your lessons ready? for Sir John is grown such an atheist of late, he'll believe nothing upon easy terms.

Con. We'll find means to extend his faith, madam, But pray how do you find him this morning?

L. Brute. Most lamentably morose, chewing the cud after last night's discovery, of which, however, he has but a confus'd notion e'en now. But I'm

afraid the valet de chambre has told him all; for they are very busy together at this moment. When I told him of Belinda's marriage, I had no other answer but a grunt: from which you may draw what conclusions you think fit. But to your notes, gentlemen, he's here.

Enter Sir JOHN and RASOR.

Con. Good-morrow, sir.

Heart. Good-morrow, Sir John; I'm very sorry my indiscretion should cause so much disorder in your family.

Sir John. Disorders generally come from indiscretion, sir; 't is no strange thing at all.

L. Brute. I hope, my dear, you are satisfied there was no wrong intended you.

Sir John. None, my dove.

Bel. If not, I hope my consent to marry Mr. Heart-free will convince you. For, as little as I know of amours, sir, I can assure you, one intrigue is enough to bring four people together, without further mischief.

Sir John. And I know too, that intrigues tend to procreation of more kinds than one. One intrigue will beget another, as soon as beget a son or a daughter.

Con. I am very sorry, sir, to see you still seem unsatisfy'd with a lady, whose more than common virtue, I am sure, were she my wife, should meet a better usage.

Sir John. Sir, if her conduct has put a trick upon her virtue, her virtue 's the bubble, but her husband 's the loser.

Con. Sir, you have received a sufficient answer already, to justify both her conduct and mine. You 'll pardon me for meddling in your family affairs! but I perceive I am the man you are jealous of, and therefore it concerns me.

Sir John. Would it did not concern me, and then I should not care who it concern'd.

Con. Well, sir, if truth and reason won't content you, I know but one way more, which, if you think fit, you may take.

Sir John. Lord, sir, you are very hasty: if I had been found at prayers in your wife's closet, I should have allow'd you twice as much time to come to yourself in.

Con. Nay, sir, if time be all you want, we have no quarrel.

Heart. I told you how the sword would work upon him.

[*Sir John muses.*]

Con. Let him muse; however, I 'll lay fifty pounds our foreman brings us in, not guilty.

Sir John. [*Aside.*] 'T is very well—'t is very well—In spite of that young jade's matrimonial intrigue, I am a downright stinking cuckold—Here they are—Boo—[*Putting his hand to his forehead.*] Methinks I could butt with a bull. What the plague did I marry for? I knew she did not like me; if she had, she would have lain with me; for I would have done so,

because I lik'd her ; but that 's past, and I have her. And now what shall I do with her ?—If I put my horns into my pocket, she 'll grow insolent—if I don't, that goat there, that stallion, is ready to whip me through the guts—the debate then is reduced to this ; shall I die a hero, or live a rascal ?—Why, wiser men than I have long since concluded, that a living dog is better than a dead lion. [*To Con. and Heart.*] Gentlemen, now my wine and my passion are governable, I must own, I have never observ'd any thing in my wife's course of life, to back me in my jealousy of her : but jealousy 's a mark of love ; so she need not trouble her head about it, as long as I make no more words on 't.

Lady FANCYFUL *enters disguised, and addresses BE-*
LINDA *apart.*

Con. I 'm glad to see your reason rule at last. Give me your hand : I hope you 'll look upon me as you us'd to do.

Sir John. Your humble servant. [*Aside.*] A wheedling son of a whore !

Heart. And that I may be sure you are friends with me too, pray give me your consent to wed your niece.

Sir John. Sir, you have it with all my heart ; damn me if you han 't. [*Aside.*] 'T is time to get rid of her ; a young pert pimp : she 'll make an incomparable bawd in a little time.

Enter a Servant, who gives Heartfree a Letter.

Bel. Heartfree your husband, say you? 'Tis impossible!

L. Fan. Would to kind heaven it were; but 'tis too true; and in the world there lives not such a wretch. I 'm young; and either I have been flatter'd by my friends, as well as glass, or nature has been kind and generous to me. I had a fortune too was greater far than he could ever hope for; but with my heart I am robb'd of all the rest. I am slighted and I 'm beggar'd both at once; I have scarce a bare subsistence from the villain, yet dare complain to none; for he has sworn, if ever 'tis known I am his wife, he 'll murder me. [Weeping.]

Bel. The traitor.

L. Fan. I accidentally was told he courted you: charity soon prevailed upon me to prevent your misery; and, as you see, I 'm still so generous even to him, as not to suffer he should do any thing, for which the law might take away his life. [Weeping.]

Bel. Poor creature! How I pity her!

[They continue talking aside.]

Heart. [Aside.] Death and the devil—Let me read it again. [Reads.] 'Though I have a particular reason not to let you know who I am till I see you; yet you 'll easily believe 'tis a faithful friend that gives you this advice. I have lain with Belinda—(Good!)—I have a child by her—(Better and better!)—which is now out at nurse—(Heaven be prais'd!)—and I think the foun-

dation laid for another—(Ha!—old true-penny!)—no rack could have tortur'd this story from me; but friendship has done it. I heard of your design to marry her, and could not see you abus'd. Make use of my advice, but keep my secret till I ask you for 't again. Adieu.'

[Exit L. Fancyful.]

Con. *[To Belinda.]* Come, madam, shall we send for the parson? I doubt here's no business for the lawyers; younger brothers have nothing to settle but their hearts, and that I believe my friend here has already done very faithfully.

Bel. *[Scornfully.]* Are you sure, sir, there are no old mortgages upon it?

Heart. *[Coldly.]* If you think there are, madam, it may n't be amiss to defer the marriage till you are sure they are paid off.

Bel. We'll defer it as long as you please, sir.

Heart. The more time we take to consider on 't, madam, the less apt we shall be to commit oversights: therefore, if you please, we will put it off for just nine months.

Bel. Guilty consciences make men cowards.

Heart. And they make women desperate.

Bel. I do n't wonder you want time to resolve.

Heart. I do n't wonder you are so quickly determined.

Bel. What does the fellow mean?

Heart. What does the lady mean?

Sir *John*. Zoons, what do you both mean?

[Heart. and Bel. walk chafing about.]

Razor. [*Aside.*] Here is so much sport going to be spoil'd it makes me ready to weep again. A pox o' this impertinent Lady Fancyful, and her plots, and her Frenchwoman too; "she 's a whimsical, ill-natur'd bitch, and when I have got my bones broke in her service, 't is ten to one but my recompence is a clap;" I hear them tittering without still. I-cod, I'll e'en go lug them both in by the ears, and discover the plot, to secure my pardon. [*Exit.*]

Con. Pr'ythee explain, Heartfree.

Heart. A fair deliverance; thank my stars and my friend.

Bel. 'T is well it went no farther; a base fellow!

L. Brute. What can be the meaning of all this?

Bel. What's his meaning, I do n't know; but mine is, that if I had married him, I had had no husband.

Heart. And what 's her meaning, I do n't know; but mine is, that if I had married her, I had had wife enough.

Sir John. Your people of wit have got such cramp ways of expressing themselves, they seldom comprehend one another. Pox take you both, will you speak that you may be understood?

Enter RAZOR in sackcloth, pulling in Lady FANCYFUL and MADEMOISELLE.

Razor. If they won't, here comes an interpreter.

L. Brute. Heavens! What have we here?

K

Razor. A villain—but a repenting villain.

All. Razor!

L. Brute. What means this?

Razor. Nothing, without my pardon.

L. Brute. What pardon do you want?

Razor. Imprimis. Your ladyship's, for a damnable lie made upon your spotless virtue, and set to the tune of Spring Garden. [*To Sir John.*] Next at my generous master's feet I bend for interrupting his more noble thoughts with phantoms of disgraceful cuckoldom. [*To Constant.*] Thirdly, I to this gentleman apply for making him the hero of my romance. [*To Heartfree.*] Fourthly, your pardon, noble sir, I ask for clandestinely marrying you, without either bidding of banns, bishop's licence, friends consent, or your own knowledge. [*To Belinda.*] And lastly, to my good young lady's clemency I come, for pretending the corn was sow'd in the ground, before ever the plough had been in the field,

Sir John. [Aside.] So that, after all, 't is a moot point whether I am a cuckold or not.

Bel. Well, sir, upon condition you confess all, I'll pardon you myself, and try to obtain as much from the rest of the company. But I must know then who 't is has put you upon all this mischief.

Razor. Satan and his equipage; woman tempted me, vice weakened me—and so the devil overcame me: as fell Adam, so fell I.

Bel. Then pray, Mr. Adam, will you make us acquainted with your Eve?

Razor. [*To Madem.*] Unmask, for the honour of France.

All. Mademoiselle !

Madem. Me ask ten thousand pardon of all de good company.

Sir John. Why this mystery thickens instead of clearing up. [*To Razor.*] Your son of a whore you, put us out of our pain.

Razor. One moment brings sunshine. [*Shewing Madem.*] 'T is true, this is the woman that tempted me, but this is the serpent that tempted the woman ; and if my prayers might be heard, her punishment for so doing should be like the serpents of old—[*Pulls off Lady Fancyful's mask*] she should lie upon her face all the days of her life :

All. Lady Fancyful !

Bel. Impertinent !

L. Brute. Ridiculous !

All. Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

Bel. I hope your ladyship will give me leave to wish you joy, since you have own'd your marriage yourself.—[*To Heartfree.*] I vow 't was strangely wicked in you to think of another wife, when you have one already so charming as her ladyship :

All. Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

L. Fan. [*Aside.*] Confusion seize 'em, as it seizes me !

" *Madem.* Que le diable étouffe ce maraut de Razor."

Bel. Your ladyship seems disorder'd : a breeding

qualm, perhaps, Mr. Heartfree: your bottle of Hungarian water to your lady. Why, madam, he stands as unconcern'd as if he were your husband in earnest.

L. Fan. Your mirth 's as nauseous as yourself. Belinda, you think you triumph over a rival now; *hélas!* *ma pauvre fille*. Where'er I'm a rival, there 's no cause for mirth. No, my poor wretch, 't is from another principle I have acted. I knew that thing there would make so perverse a husband, and you so impertinent a wife, that lest your mutual plagues should make you both run mad, I charitably would have broke the match. He! he! he! he! he!

[*Exit, laughing affectedly, Madem. following her.*]

Madem. He! he! he! he! he!

All. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Sir John. [*Aside.*] Why now, this woman will be married to somebody too.

Bel. Poor creature! What a passion she is in! but I forgive her.

Heart. Since you have so much goodness for her, I hope you 'll pardon my offence too, madam.

Bel. There will be no great difficulty in that, since I am guilty of an equal fault.

Heart. So, madam, now had the parson but done business——

You 'd be half weary of your bargain.

Heart. No, sure, I might dispense with one 's lodging.

Bel. I 'm ready to try, sir."

Heart. Then let 's to church;

And if it be our chance to disagree——

Bel. Take heed—the surly husband's fate you see.

Sir John. Surly I may be, stubborn I am not,

For I have both forgiven and forgot;

If so, be these our judges, Mrs. Pert,

'T is more by my goodness, than your desert.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Lady BRUTE and BELINDA:

L. Brute. *No Epilogue!*

Bel. *I swear I know of none.*

L. Brute. *Lord! How shall we excuse it to the town?*

Bel. *Why we must e'en say something of our own.*

L. Brute. *Our own! Ay, that must needs be precious stuff:*

Bel. *I'll lay my life they'll like it well enough.*

Come, faith, begin——

L. Brute. *Excuse me, after you.*

Bel. *Nay, pardon me for that, I know my cue.*

L. Brute. *O for the world I would not have precedence.*

Bel. *O lord!*

L. Brute. *I swear——*

Bel. *O fie!*

L. Brute. *I'm all obedience.*

First then know all, before our doom is fixt.

The third day is for us——

Bel. *Nay and the sixth.*

L. Brute. *We speak not from the poet now, nor is it*

His cause——(I want a Rhyme.)

Bel. *That we solicit.*

L. Brute. *Then sure you cannot have the hearts to be
severe,*

And damn us——

Bel. *Damn us! Let 'm, if they dare.*

L. Brute. *Why, if they should, what punishment remains?*

Bel. *Eternal exile from behind our scenes.*

L. Brute. *But if they're kind, that sentence we'll recall,
We can be grateful——*

Bel. *And have wherewithall.*

L. Brute. *But as grand treaties hope not to be trusted,
Before preliminaries are adjusted,*

Bel. *You know the time, and we appoint this place;
Where, if you please, we'll meet, and sign
the peace.*

THE END.



THE
FUNERAL;
OR,
GRIEF A - LA - MODE.

A
COMEDY,
BY SIR RICHARD STEELE,

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK.

By Permission of the Manager.

The Lines distinguished by Inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

LONDON:

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M D C C X C I V.



PROLOGUE.

*NATURE's deserted and dramatic art,
To dazzle now the eye, has left the heart ;
Gay lights and dresses, long-extended scenes,
Demons and Angels moving in machines ;
All that can now, or please, or fright the fair,
May be perform'd without a writer's care,
And is the skill of carpenter, not player.
Old Shakspeare's days could not thus far advance ;
But what 's his buskin to our ladder dance ?
In the mid region a silk youth to stand,
With that unwieldy engine at command !
Gorg'd with intemperate meals while here you sit,
Well may you take activity for wit :
Fie, let confusion on such dulness seize ;
Blush you 're so pleas'd, as we that so we please.
But we, still kind to your inverted sense,
Do most unnatural things once more dispense,
For since you're still prepost'rous in delight,
Our author made, a full house to invite,
A funeral comedy to-night.
Nor does he fear that you will take the hint,
And let the funeral his own be meant ;
No, in old England, nothing can be won
Without a faction, good or ill be done ;
To own this our frank author does not fear ;
But hopes for a prevailing party here : [it,
He knows h' has num'rous friends, nay knows they 'll shew
And for the fellow-soldier save the poet.*

Dramatis Personæ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Lord BRUMPTON,	- - -	Mr. Powel.
Lord HARDY, son to Lord BRUMPTON,		Mr. Pope.
Mr. CAMPLEY,	- - -	Mr. Lewis.
Mr. TRUSTY, Steward to Lord Brumpton,		Mr. Hull.
CABINET,	- - - - -	Mr. Claremont.
Mr. SABLE, an Undertaker,	- -	Mr. Quick.
PUZZLE, a Lawyer,	- - - -	Mr. Munden.
TRIM, Servant to Lord HARDY,	-	Mr. Fawcet.
TOM, the Lawyer's Clerk,	- - -	Mr. Blanchard.

Women.

Lady BRUMPTON,	- - - -	Mrs. Mattocks.
Lady CHARLOTTE, an Orphan, ward to Lord BRUMPTON	- - -	Miss Hopkins.
Lady HARRIOT, her Sister,	- -	Mrs. Esten.
Mademoiselle D'EPINGLE,	- -	Miss Leserve.
TATTLEAID,	- - - -	Miss Stuart.
Mrs. FARDINGALE,	- - - -	Mrs. Leicester.
KATE MATCHLOCK,	- - -	

Visitant Ladies, Sable's Servants, Recruits, &c.

Scene Covent Garden.



THE
FUNERAL.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter CABINET, SABLE, and CAMPLEY.

Cabinet.

I BURST into laughter. I can't bear to see writ over an undertaker's door, Dresses for the dead, and necessaries for funerals! ha! ha! ha!

Sab. Well, sir, 't is very well, I know you are of the laughers, the wits that take the liberty to deride all things that are magnificent and solemn.

Cab. But is it not strangely contradictory, that men can come to so open, so apparent an hypocrisy, as, in the face of all the world, to hire professed mourners to grieve, lament, and follow in their stead, the nearest relations, and suborn others to do by art what they themselves should be prompted to by nature.

Sab. Alas! sir, the value of all things under the sun is merely fantastic; we run, we strive, and pur-

chase things with our blood and money, quite foreign to our intrinsic real happiness, and which have a being in imagination only, as you may see by the pother that is made about precedence, titles, court-favours, maidenheads, and china-ware.

Camp. Ay, Mr. Sable, but all those are objects that promote our joy, are bright to the eye, or stamp upon our minds pleasure and self-satisfaction.

Sab. You are extremely mistaken—and there is often nothing more inwardly distress'd, than a young bride in her glittering retinue, or deeply joyful, than a young widow in her weeds, and black train; of both which, the lady of this house may be an instance, for she has been the one, and is, I'll be sworn, the other.

Cab. You talk, Mr. Sable, most learnedly.

Sab. I have the deepest learning, sir, experience: remember your widow cousin, that married last month.

Cab. Ay, but how could you imagine she was in all that grief an hypocrite! Could all those shrieks, those swoonings, that rising falling bosom be constrained? You're uncharitable, Sable, to believe it: What colour, what reason had you for it?

Sab. But as for her, nothing, she resolv'd, that look'd bright or joyous should after her love's death approach her. All her servants that were not coal black must turn out! a fair complexion made her eyes and heart ache, she'd none but downright jet, and to exceed all example, she hir'd my mourning furniture

by the year, and in case of my mortality ty'd my son to the same article; so in six weeks time ran away with a young fellow.—Pr'ythee, push on briskly, Mr. Cabinet, now is your time to have this widow, for Tattleaid tells me, she always said she'd never marry——

Cab. As you say, that's generally the most hopeful sign.

Sab. I tell you, sir, 't is an infallible one; you know those professions are only to introduce discourse of matrimony and young fellows.

Cab. But I swear I could not have confidence, ev'n after all our long acquaintance, and the mutual love which his lordship (who indeed has now been so kind as to leave us) has so long interrupted, to mention a thing of such a nature so unseasonably——

Sab. Unseasonably! why I tell you 't is the only season (granting her sorrow unfeigned :) when would you speak of passion, but in the midst of passions? there's a what d'ye call a crisis—the lucky minute, that's so talk'd of, is a moment between joy and grief, which you must take hold of, and push your fortune. But get you in, and you'll best read your fate in the reception Mrs. Tattleaid gives you: all she says, and all she does, nay, her very love and hatred are mere repetitions of her ladyship's passions: I'll say that for her, she's a true lady's woman, and is herself as much a second-hand thing as her clothes. But I must beg your pardon, sir, my people are come, I see.
[Exit Cab. and Camp. Enter Sable's Men.]—Where

in the name of goodness have you all been ! have you brought the saw-dust and tar for embalming ? have you the hangings and the sixpenny nails, and my lord's coat of arms ?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Yes, sir, and had come sooner, but I went to the herald's for a coat for Alderman Gathergrease that died last night—he has promised to invent one against to-morrow.

Sab. Ah ! pox take some of our cits, the first thing after their death is to take care of their birth—pox, let him bear a pair of stockings, he is the first of his family that ever wore one ; well, come you that are to be mourners in this house put on your sad looks, and walk by me that I may sort you. Ha, you ! a little more upon the dismal ; [*forming their countenances.*]—this fellow has a good mortal look—place him near the corpse ; that wainscot face must be o'top of the stairs ; that fellow's almost in a fright (that looks as if he were full of some strange misery) at the entrance of the hall—So—but I'll fix you all myself—Let's have no laughing now on any provocation ; [*makes faces.*] Look yonder, that hale well-looking puppy ! You ungrateful scoundrel, did not I pity you, take you out of a great man's service, and shew you the pleasure of receiving wages ? Did not I give you ten, then fifteen, now twenty shillings a week, to be sorrowful ? and the more I give you, I think, the gladder you are.

Enter a Boy.

Boy. Sir, the grave-digger of St. Timothy's in the Fields would speak with you.

Sab. Let him come in.

Enter Grave-digger.

Grav. I carried home to your house the shroud the gentleman was buried in last night; I could not get his ring off very easily, therefore I brought you the finger and all; and, sir, the sexton gives his service to you, and desires to know whether you'd have any bodies remov'd or not: if not, he'll let them lie in their graves a week longer.

Sab. Give him my service.

Enter GOODY TRASH.

I wonder, Goody Trash, you could not be more punctual; when I told you I wanted you, and your two daughters, to be three virgins to-night to stand in white about my Lady Catherine Grissel's body, and you know you were privately to bring her home from the man-midwife's, where she died in child-birth, to be buried like a maid; but there is nothing minded: well, I have put off that till to-morrow; go, and get your bags of brick-dust and your whiting. Go, and sell to the cook-maids; know who is surfeited about town; bring me no bad news, none of your recoveries again. [*Exit Goody Trash.*] And you, Mr. Block-head, I warrant you have not call'd at Mr. Pestle's the

apothecary : will that fellow never pay me ? I stand bound for all the poison in that starving murderer's shop ? he serves me just as Dr. Quibus did, who promised to write a treatise against water gruel, a damn'd healthy slop that has done me more injury than all the faculty : look you now, you are all upon the sneer, let me have none but downright stupid countenances—I've a good mind to turn you all off, and take people out of the playhouse ; but hang them, they are as ignorant of their parts as you are of yours ; they never act but when they speak ; when the chief indication of the mind is in the gesture, or indeed in case of sorrow, in no gesture, except you were to act a widow, or so—but yours, you dolts, is all in dumb show, dumb show. I mean expressive elegant show : as who can see such an horrid ugly phiz as that fellow's, and not be shocked, offended, and killed of all joy while he beholds it ? But we must not loiter—Ye stupid rogues, whom I have picked out of the rubbish of mankind, and fed for your eminent worthlessness, attend, and know that I speak you this moment stiff and immutable to all sense of noise, mirth or laughter ; [*Makes mouths at them as they pass by him to bring them to a constant countenance.*] So, they are pretty well—pretty well—— [Exit.]

Enter TRUSTY and Lord BRUMPTON.

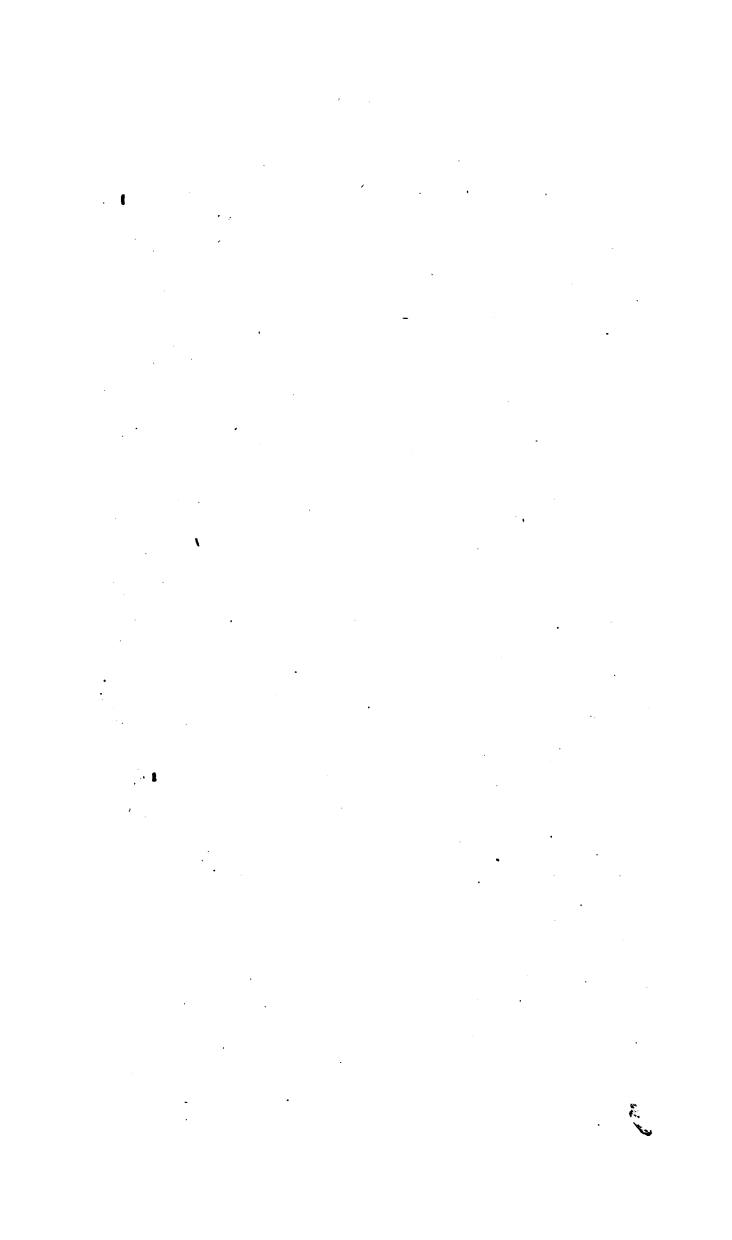
Trusty. 'T was fondness, sir, and tender duty to you, who have been so worthy and so just a master to

BRITISH THEATRE



THE FUNERAL.

*as who can see such an horrid sight
ph's as that follows and not be shocked.*



me, made me stay near you ; they left me so, and there I found you wake from your lethargic slumber ; on which I will assume an authority to beseech you, sir, to make just use of your revived life, in seeing who are your true friends, and knowing her who has so wrought upon your noble nature, as to make it act against itself in disinheriting your brave son.

L. Brump. Sure 't is impossible she should be such a creature as you tell me—My mind reflects upon ten thousand endearments that plead unanswerably for her : her chaste reluctant love, her easy observance of all my wayward humours, to which she would accommodate herself with so much ease, I could scarce observe it was a virtue in her ; she hid her very patience.

Trusty. It was all art, sir, or indifference to you ; for what I say is downright matter of fact.

L. Brump. Why didst thou ever tell me it ! or why not in my life-time, for I must call it so, nor can I date a minute mine, after her being false ; all past that moment is death and darkness : Why didst thou not tell me then, I say ?

Trusty. Because you were too much in love with her to be inform'd ; I must, I will conjure you to be conceal'd, and but contain yourself in hearing one discourse with that cursed instrument of all her secrets, that Tattleaid, and you will see what I tell you ; you will call me then your guardian and good genius.

L. Brump. Well, you shall govern me, but would I had died in earnest ere I had known it ; my head

swims, as it did when I fell into my fit, at the thoughts of it.—All human life's a mere vertigo!

Trusty. Ay, ay, my lord, fine reflections, fine reflections, but that does no business. Thus, sir, we'll stand concealed, and hear, I doubt not, a much sincerer dialogue than usual between vicious persons; for a late accident has given a little jealousy, which makes them over-act their love and confidence in each other.

[They retire.]

Enter WIDOW and TATTLEAID meeting, and running to each other.

Wid. Oh, Tattleaid! his and our hour is come!

Tat. I always said by his church-yard cough, you'd bury him, but still you were impatient——

Wid. Nay, thou hast ever been my comfort, my confidant, my friend, and my servant: and now I'll reward thy pains; for tho' I scorn the whole sex of fellows, I'll give them hopes for thy sake; every smile, every frown, every gesture, humour, caprice, and whimsy of mine, shall be gold to thee, girl; thou shalt feel all the sweets and wealth of being a fine rich widow's woman. Oh! how my head runs my first year out, and jumps to all the joys of widowhood! if thirteen months hence a friend should haul one to a play one has a mind to see, what pleasure 't will be, when my Lady Brumpton's footman's called, who kept a place for that very purpose, to make a sudden insurrection of fine wigs in the pit and side-boxes. Then, with a pretty sorrow in one's face, and a wil-

ling blush for being stared at, one ventures to look round, and bow to one of one's own quality. Thus [*very directly*] to a snug pretending fellow of no fortune. Thus [*as scarce seeing him*] to one that writes lampoons. Thus [*fearfully*] to one one really loves. Thus [*looking down*] to one woman acquaintance: from box to box thus [*with looks differently familiar.*] Then the serenades! the lovers!

Tat. Oh, madam, you make my heart bound within me. I'll warrant you, madam, I'll manage them all; and, indeed, madam, the men are really very silly creatures, 't is no such hard matter—They rulers! they governors! I warrant you, indeed!

Wid. Ay, Tattleaid, they imagine themselves mighty things, I laugh to see men go on our errands; strut in great offices, live in cares, hazards and scandals, to come home and be fools to us in brags of their dispatches and negociations, and their wisdoms—as my good dear deceas'd used to entertain me; which, I to relieve myself from—would lisp some silly request, pat him on the face—He shakes his head at my pretty folly, calls me simpleton—gives me a jewel, then goes to bed so wise, so satisfied, and so deceived——

Tat. But I protest, madam, I've always wonder'd how you could accomplish my young lord's being disinherited.

Wid. Why, Tatty, you must know my late lord—how prettily that sounds, my late lord! but I say, my late Lord Fribble was generosity—I press'd him

there, and whenever you, by my order, had told him stories to my son-in-law's disadvantage, in his rage and resentment, I (whose interest lay otherwise) always fell on my knees to implore his pardon, and with tears, sighs, and importunities for him prevailed against him: besides this, you know I had, when I pleased, fits.—Fits are a mighty help in the government of a good-natured man.

Tat. O rare madam! you ladyship's a great head-piece; but now, dear madam, is the hard task, if I may take the liberty to say it—to enjoy all freedoms and seem to abstain; but now, madam, a fine young gentleman with a red coat, that dances—

Wid. You may be sure the happy man (if it be in fate that there is a happy man to make me an unhappy woman) shall not be an old one again; but the day is now my own—Yet now I think on 't, Tattleaid, be sure to keep an obstinate shyness to all our old acquaintance.

Tat. Ay, madam—I believe, madam—I speak, madam, but my humble sense—Mr. Cabinet would marry you.

Wid. Marry me! No, Tattleaid, he that is so mean as to marry a woman after an affair with her, will be so base as to upbraid that very weakness.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A gentleman to Mrs. Tattleaid—[*Exit Tat.*

Wid. Go to him.—Bless me how careless and open have I been to this subtle creature in the case of Ca-

binet, she 's certainly in his interests. How miserable it is to have one one hates always about one, and when one can 't endure one's own reflection upon some actions, who can bear the thoughts of another upon them? but she has me by deep secrets——

Enter TATTLEAID.

Tat. Madam, counsellor Puzzle is come to wait on your ladyship about the will and the conveyance of the estate—there must, it seems, be no time lost for fear of things; fye, fye, madam, you a widow these three hours, and not look'd on a parchment yet—Oh, impious! to neglect the will of the dead!

Wid. As you say indeed, there is no will of a husband's so willingly obeyed as his last. But I must go in, and receive him in my formalities; leaning on a couch is a necessary posture, as his going behind his desk when he speaks to a client—But do you bring him in hither till I am ready—— *[Exit,*

Tat. Mr. Counsellor, Mr. Counsellor— *[Calling.*

Enter PUZZLE and Clerk.

Puz. Servant, good madam Tattleaid, my ancient friend is gone, but business must be minded——

Tat. I told my lady twice or thrice, as she lies in dumb grief on the couch within, that you were here, but she regarded me not; however, since you say it is of such moment, I'll venture to introduce you; please but to repose here a little, while I step in; for methinks I would a little prepare her.

Puz. Alas! alas! poor lady! *[Exit Tattleaid.*

Damn'd hypocrites ; well, this nobleman's death is a little sudden : therefore pray let me recollect : open the bag, good Tom. Now, Tom, thou art my nephew, my dear sister Kate's only son, and my heir, therefore I will conceal from thee on no occasion any thing ; for I would enter thee into business as soon as possible. Know then, child, that the lord of this house was one of your men of honour, and sense, who lose the latter in the former, and are apt to take all men to be like themselves ; now this gentleman intirely trusted me, and I made the only use a man of business can of a trust, I cheated him ; for I imperceptibly, before his face, made his whole estate liable to an hundred per annum for myself, for good services, &c. As for legacies, they are good or not, as I please ; for let me tell you, a man must take pen, ink, and paper, sit down by an old fellow, and pretend to take directions, but a true lawyer never makes any man's will but his own ; and as the priest of old among us got near the dying man, and gave all to the church, so now the lawyer gives all to the law.

Clerk. Ay, sir, but priests then cheated the nation by doing their offices in an unknown language.

Puz. True—but ours is a way much surer ; for we cheat in no language at all, but loll in our own coaches, elegant in gibberish, and learned in jingle. Pull out the parchment ; there's the deed ; I made it as long as I could—Well, I hope to see the day, when the indenture shall be the exact measure of the band that passes by it ; for 't is a discouragement to

the gown, that every ignorant rogue of an heir should in a word or two understand his father's meaning, and hold ten acres of land by half an acre of parchment—Nay, I hope to see the time when that there is indeed some progress made in, shall be wholly effected; and by the improvement of the noble art of tautology, every inn in Holborn an inn of court. Let others think of logic, rhetoric, and I know not what impertinence, but mind thou tautology—What's the first excellence in a lawyer? Tautology. What's the second? Tautology. What's the third? Tautology; as an old pleader said of action. But to turn to the deed—[*Pulls out an immeasurable parchment.*] for the will is of no force if I please, for he was not capable of making one after the former, as I managed it—upon which account I now wait on my lady—by the way, Tom, do you know the true meaning of the word a deed?

Clerk. Ay, sir, as if a man should say the deed.

Puz. Right; 'tis emphatically so called, because after it all deeds and actions are of no effect, and you have nothing to do but hang yourself—the only obliging thing you can then do. But I was telling you the use of tautology—Read towards the middle of that instrument.

Clerk. [*Reads.*] I the said Earl of Brumpton, do give, bestow, grant, and bequeath, over and above the said premises, all the site and capital messuage, called by the name of Oatham, and all out-houses, barns, stables, and other edifices and buildings, yards, orchards, gardens, fields, arbors, trees, lands, earths,

meadows, greens, pastures, feedings, woods, under-woods, ways, waters, water-courses, fishing-ponds, pools, commons, common of pasture, paths, heath-thickets, profits, commodities, and emoluments, with their and every of their appurtenances whatsoever, to the said capital messuage and cite belonging, or in any wise appertaining, or with the same heretofore used, occupied, or enjoyed, accepted, executed, known, or taken as part, parcel, or member of the same; containing in the whole, by estimation, four hundred acres of the large measure, or thereabouts, be the same more or less; all and singular which the said site, capital messuage, and other the premises, with their and every of their appurtenances, are situate, lying, and being—

[Puzzle nods and sneers as the synonymous words are repeating, whom L. Brumpton scornfully mimics.]

Puz. Hold, hold, good Tom; you do come on indeed in business, but don't use your nose enough in reading—[Reads in a ridiculous low tone till out of breath.] —Why, you're quite out; you read to be understood—let me see it—I the said earl—Now again, suppose this were to be in latin—[Runs into Latin terminations.] Making Latin is only making it no English—*Ego prædict*—*Comes de Brumpton*—*totas meas barnos—outhousas & stabulas—yardos*—But there needs no further perusal. I now recollect the whole—my lord, by this instrument, disinherits his son utterly, gives all to my lady; and moreover, grants the guardianship of two fortune wards to her—*id est*, to be sold by her, which is the subject of my business to her ladyship,

who, methinks, a little overdoes the affair of grief, in letting me wait thus long on such welcome articles——
But here——

Enter TATTLEAID, wiping her eyes.

Tat. I have, in vain, done all I can to make her regard me. Pray, Mr. Puzzle, you're a man of sense, come in yourself, and speak reason, to bring her to some consideration of herself, if possible.

Puz. Tom, I'll come down to the hall to you; dear madam, lead on.

[Exit Clerk one way, Puz. and Tat. another.]

[Lord Brumpton and Trusty advance from their concealment, after a long pause, and staring at each other.]

L. Brump. Trusty, on thy sincerity, on thy fidelity to me, thy friend, thy patron, and thy master, answer me directly to one question—Am I really alive? Am I that identical, that numerical, that very same Lord Brumpton, that——

Trusty. That very lord—that very Lord Brumpton, the very generous, honest, and good Lord Brumpton, who spent his strong and riper years with honour and reputation; that very Lord Brumpton, who buried a fine lady, who brought him a fine son, who is a fine gentleman; but in his age, that very man, unseasonably captivated with youth and beauty, married a very fine young lady, who has dishonoured his bed, disinherited his brave son, and dances o'er his grave.

L. Brump. Oh, that damn'd tautologist too!——
That Puzzle, and his irrevocable deed:—*[Pausing.]*——

Well, I know I do not really live, but wander o'er the place where once I had a treasure—I'll haunt her, Trusty, gaze in that false beauteous face, till she trembles, till she looks pale, nay, till she blushes—

Trusty. Ay, ay, my lord, you speak a ghost very much; there's flesh and blood in that expression—that false beauteous face!

L. Brump. Then, since you see my weakness, be a friend, and arm me with all your care, and all your reason—

Trusty. If you'll condescend to let me direct you, you shall cut off this rotten limb, this false, disloyal wife, and save your noble parts, your son, your family, your honour.

*Short is the date in which ill acts prevail,
But honesty's a rock can never fail.*

[*Exeunt,*

ACT II, SCENE I.

Enter Lord HARDY.

Lord Hardy.

Now, indeed, I am utterly undone—but to expect an evil softens the weight of it when it happens; and pain, no more than pleasure, is in reality so great as in expectation. But what will become of me?—How shall I keep myself even above worldly want?—*Shall I live at home, a stiff, melancholy, poor man of*

quality; grow uneasy to my acquaintance as well as myself, by fancying I am slighted where I am not; with all the thousand particularities which attend those whom low fortune and high spirit make malcontents? No! we have a brave prince on the throne, whose commission I bear, and a glorious war in an honest cause approaching, [*clapping his hand on his sword.*] in which this shall cut out bread for me, and may, perhaps, equal that estate to which my birth entitled me — But what to do in present pressures—Ha, Trim! [*Calling.*

Enter TRIM.

Trim. My lord!

L. Hardy. How do the poor rogues that are to recruit my company?

Trim. Do, sir? They have eat you to your last guinea.

L. Hardy. Were you at the agent's?

Trim. Yes.

L. Hardy. Well, and how?

Trim. Why, sir, for your arrears, you may have eleven shillings in the pound; but he'll not touch your growing subsistence under three shillings in the pound interest; besides which, you must let his clerk, Jonathan Item, swear the peace against you, to keep you from duelling; or insure your life, which you may do for eight *per cent.* On these terms he'll oblige you, which he would not do for any body else in the regiment; but he has a friendship for you.

L. Hardy. Oh, I am his humble servant ! but he must have his own terms ; we can't starve, nor must the fellows want. But methinks this is a calm midnight ; I have heard no duns to-day.

Trim. Duns, my lord ! Why, now your father's dead, and they can't arrest you, I shall grow a little less upon the smooth with them than I have been. Why, friend, says I, how often must I tell you my lord is not stirring ? His lordship has not slept well, you must come some other time ; your lordship will send for him when you are at leisure to look upon money affairs ; or if they are so saucy, so impertinent as to press a man of your quality for their own, there are canes, there's Bridewell, there's the stocks for your ordinary tradesmen ; but to an haughty, thriving, Covent Garden mercer, silk, or laceman, your lordship gives your most humble service to him, hopes his wife is well ; you have letters to write, or you would see him yourself ; but you desire he would be with you punctually on such a day, that is to say, the day after you are gone out of town.

L. Hardy. Go, sirrah, you are scurrilous : I won't believe there are such men of quality—d'ye hear, give my service this afternoon to Mr. Cutpurse, the agent, and tell him I am obliged to pay him for his readiness to serve me, for I am resolved to pay my debts forthwith——

[*A voice without.*] I don't know whether he is within or not. Mr. Trim, is my lord within ?

L. Hardy. Trim, see who it is ; I am not within, you know——

[*Exit Trim.*]

Trim. [*Without.* Yes, sir, my lord is above; pray walk up——

L. Har. Who can it be; he owns me too.

Enter CAMPLEY and TRIM.

Dear Tom Campley, this is kind—You are an extraordinary man, indeed, who, in the sudden accession of a noble fortune, can still be yourself, and visit your less happy friends.

Camp. No, you are, my lord, the extraordinary man, who, on the loss of an almost princely fortune, can be master of a temper that makes you the envy, rather than pity of your more fortunate, not more happy friends.

L. Har. Oh, sir, your servant!—But let me gaze on thee a little—I han't seen thee since we came home into England—most exactly, negligently, genteely dressed—I know there is more than ordinary in this. [*Beating Campley's breast.*] Come, confess who shares with me here.—I must have her real and poetical name——Come, she is in sonnet, Cynthia; in prose, mistress——

Camp. One you little dream of; tho' she is in a manner of your placing there.

L. Har. My placing there!——

Camp. Why, my lord, all the fine things you have said to me in the camp, of my lady Charlotte, your father's ward, ran in my head so very much, that I made it my business to become acquainted in that

family, which I did by Mr. Cabinet's means, and am now in love in the same place with your lordship.

L. Har. How! in love in the same place with me, Mr. Campley?

Camp. Ay, my lord, with t' other sister, with t' other sister.

L. Har. What a dunce was I, not to know which, without your naming her? Why, thou art the only man breathing fit to deal with her——But my Lady Charlotte; there's a woman!——so easily virtuous; so agreeably severe; her motion so unaffected, yet so composed; her lips breathe nothing but truth, good sense, and flowing wit.

Camp. Lady Harriot; there's the woman! Her lips are made of gum and balm—There is something in that dear girl that fires my blood above—above—above—

L. Har. Above what?

Camp. A grenadier's march.

L. Har. A soft simile, I must confess——But, Oh, that Charlotte! to recline this aching head, full of care, on that tender, snowy, faithful bosom——

Camp. Oh, that Harriot! to embrace that beautiful——

L. Har. Ay, Tom; but methinks your head runs too much on the wedding-night only, to make your happiness lasting: mine is fixed on the married state; I expect my felicity from Lady Charlotte, in her friendship, her constancy, her piety, her household cares, her maternal tenderness——But tell me, I won-

der how you make your approaches in besieging such a sort of creature ; she that loves addresses, gallantry, fiddles ; that reigns and delights in a crowd of admirers. If I know her, she is one of those you may easily have a general acquaintance with, but hard to make particular.

Camp. You understand her very well—You must know, I put her out of all her play, by carrying it in a humorous manner ; I took care in all my actions, before I discovered the lover, that she should in general, have a good opinion of me ; so that she is now extremely at a loss how to throw me from the familiarity of an acquaintance, into the distance of a lover ; but I laugh her out of it ; when she begins to frown, and look grave at my mirth, I mimic her till she bursts out a laughing—

L. Har. That's ridiculous enough.

Camp. By Cabinet's interest over my Lady Brumpton, with gold and flattery to Mrs. Fardingle, an old maid her ladyship has placed about the young ladies, I have easy access at all times, and am this very day to be admitted by her into their apartment—I have found, you must know, that she is my relation.

L. Har. Her ladyship has chose an odd companion for young ladies.

Camp. Oh, my lady's a politician ; she told Tatleaid one day, that an old maid was the best guard for young ones ; for they, like eunuchs in a seraglio, are vigilant out of envy of enjoyment they cannot

themselves arrive at. But, as I was saying, I have sent my cousin Fardingle a song, which she and I are to practice to the spinnet—The young ladies will be by, and I am to be left alone with Lady Harriot. If you'll meet me at Tom's, have a letter ready, I will, myself, deliver it to your mistress, conduct you into the house, and tell her you are there, and find means to place you together. You must march under my command to day, as I have many a one under yours:

L. Har. But, faith, Tom, I shall not behave myself with half the resolution you have under mine; for, to confess my weakness, though I know she loves me, though I know she is stedfastly mine, as her heart can make her, I know not how, when I am near her, that my tongue falters, my nerves shake, and my heart so alternately sinks and rises, that my premeditated resolves vanish into confusion, down-cast eyes, and broken utterance.—

Camp. Ha, ha, ha! this is a campaigner too! Why, my lord, that's the condition Harriot would have me in, and then she thinks she could have me; but I, that know her better than she does herself—But I shall make her no such sacrifice. 'Tis well my lady Charlotte's a woman of so solid an understanding; I do 'nt know another that would not use you ill for your high value.

L. Har. But, Tom, I must see your song you have sent your cousin Fardingle, as you call her.

Camp. This is lucky enough—[*Aside.*—No, hang

it, my lord, a man makes so silly a figure when his verses are reading—Trim, thou hast not left off thy loving and thy rhyming; Trim's a critic: I remember him a servitor at Oxon: [*Giving a paper to Trim.*] I give myself into his hands, because you sha n't see them till I am gone—My lord, your servant—you sha n't stir.

L. Har. Nor you neither, then. [*Struggling.*

Camp. You will be obeyed.

[*Exeunt; Lord Hardy waits on him down.*

Trim. What is in this song—Ha!—don't my eyes deceive me?—a bill of three hundred pounds! [*Reads.*

' Mr. Cash,

Pray pay to Mr. William Trim, or bearer, the sum of three hundred pounds, and place it to the account of
of Sir,

Your humble servant,

THOMAS CAMPLEY.'

[*Pulling off his hat, and bowing.*] Your very humble servant, good Mr. Campley. Ay, this is poetry; this is a song indeed—Faith, I'll set it, and sing it myself—Pray pay to Mr. William Trim—so far in recitative—Three hundred—[*Singing ridiculously.*]—hun—dred—hundred—Hundred thrice repeated, because 't is three hundred pounds; I love repetitions in music, when there is a good reason for it—Po—ds, after the Italian manner. If they would bring me such sensible words as these, I would outstrip all your composers for the music prize. This was honestly done of Mr. Campley: though I have carried

him many a purse from my master, when he was en-
sign to our company in Flanders.

Re-enter Lord HARDY.

My lord, I am your lordship's humble servant.

L. Har. Sir, your humble servant. But, pray, my good familiar friend, how came you to be so very much my humble servant all of a sudden?

Trim. I beg pardon, dear sir; my lord, I am not your humble servant.

L. Har. No?

Trim. Yes, my lord, I am; but not as you mean—but I am—I am, my lord——In short, I am overjoyed.

L. Har. Overjoyed! thou art distracted——What ails the fellow? Where is Campley's song?

Trim. Oh, my lord one would not think it was in him! Mr. Campley is really a very great poet—As for the song, it is only as they all end in rhyme—owe, woe; isses, kisses; boy, joy—but, my lord, the other in long heroic blank verse: [*Reading it with a great tone.*] Pray pay to Mr. William Trim, or order, the sum of——How sweetly it runs!—Paetolian guineas chink in every line.

L. Har. How very handsomely this was done in Campley! I wondered, indeed, he was so willing to shew his verses. In how careless a manner that fellow does the greatest actions!

Trim. My lord, pray, my lord, sha n't I go immediately to Cutpurse's?

L. Har. No, sirrah ; now we have no occasion for it.

Trim. No, my lord, only to stare him full in the face after I have received this money, not say a word, but keep my hat on, and walk out : or, perhaps, not hear, if any I meet with speak to me : but grow stiff, deaf, and short-sighted to all my old acquaintance, like a sudden rich man as I am ; or, perhaps, my lord, desire Cutpurse's clerk to let me leave fifty pounds at their house, payable to Mr. William Trim, or order—till I come that way—or a month or two hence, may have occasion for it—I don't know what bills may be drawn upon me—Then, when the clerk begins to stare at me, till he pulls the great goose quill from behind his ear, [*Pulls a handful of farthings out.*] I fall a reckoning the pieces, as I do these farthings.

L. Har. Well, sirrah, you may have your humour, but be sure you take fourscore pounds, and pay my debts immediately—if you meet any officer you ever see me in company with, that looks grave at Cutpurse's house, tell him I'll speak with him—We must help our friends—But learn moderation, you rogue, in your good fortune ; be at home all the evening after, while I wait at Tom's to meet Campley, in order to see lady Charlotte——

My good or ill in her alone is found,

And in that thought all other cares are drown'd.

[Exit.

Trim. Oh dear, dear, three hundred pounds. [Exit.

Enter SABLE, Lord BRUMPTON, and TRUSTY.

Sab. Why, my lord, you can't in conscience put me off so; I must do according to my orders, cut you up, and embalm you, except you'll come down a little deeper than you talk of; you don't consider the charges I've been at already.

L. Brump. Charges! for what?

Sab. First, twenty guineas to my lady's woman for notice of your death (a fee I've before now known the widow herself go halves in), but no matter for that—in the next place, ten pounds for watching you all your long fit of sickness last winter——

L. Brump. Watching me? Why, I had none but my own servants by turns.

Sab. I mean attending to give notice of your death. I had all your long fit of sickness, last winter, at half a crown a day, a fellow waiting at your gate to bring me intelligence, but you unfortunately recovered, and I lost all my obliging pains for your service.

L. Brump. Ha! ha! ha! Sable, thou'rt a very impudent fellow. Half a crown a day to attend my decease, and dost thou reckon it to me?

Sab. Look you, gentlemen, do n't stand staring at me—I have a book at home, which I call my doomsday-book, where I have every man of quality's age and distemper in town, and know when you should drop——Nay, my lord, if you had reflected upon your mortality, half so much as poor I have for you, you would not desire to return to life thus——in short,

I cannot keep this a secret under the whole money I am to have for burying you.

L. Brumpton. Trusty, if you think it safe in you to obey my orders after the deed Puzzle told his clerk of, pay it him——

Trusty. I should be glad to give it out of my own pocket, rather than be without the satisfaction of seeing you witness to it.

L. Brumpton. I heartily believe thee, dear Trusty——

Sab. Then, my lord, the secret of your being alive is now safe with me.

Trusty. I'll warrant I'll be reveng'd of this unconscionable dog.—[*Aside.*]——My lord, you must to your closet——I fear somebody's coming——

[*Exeunt Sab. one way, and L. Brumpton. and Trusty another.*]

SCENE II.

Draws and discovers Lady CHARLOTTE reading at a Table——Lady HARRIOTT playing at a glass to and fro, and viewing herself.

Lady Har. Nay, good sage sister, you may as well talk to me, [*looking at herself as she speaks*] as sit staring at a book, which I know you can't attend—— Good Dr. Lucas may have writ there what he pleases, but there's no putting Francis Lord Hardy, now Earl of Brumpton, out of your head, or making him absent

from your eyes. Do but look on me now, and deny it if you can.

Lady *Char.* You are the maddest girl—— [*Smiling.*

Lady *Har.* Look ye, I knew you could not say it and forbear laughing—[*Looking over Charlotte.*]—Oh, I see his name as plain as you do—F—r—a—n Fran, c—i—s cis, Francis, 't is in every line of the book.

Lady *Char.* [*Rising.*] 'T is in vain, I see, to mind any thing in such impertinent company—but granting 't were as you say, as to my Lord Hardy, 't is more excusable to admire another than one's self——

Lady *Har.* No, I think not—Yes, I grant you than really to be vain at one's person, but I don't admire myself—Pish! I don't believe my eyes have that softness—[*Looking in the glass.*] They an't so piercing: no, 't is only stuff, the men will be talking—Some people are such admirers of teeth—Lord, what signifies teeth! [*Shewing her teeth.*] A very black-a-moor has as white teeth as I——No, sister, I don't admire myself, but I've a spirit of contradiction in me: you don't know I'm in love with myself, only to rival the men.

Lady *Char.* Ay, but Mr. Campley will gain ground ev'n of that rival of his, your dear self——

Lady *Har.* Oh, what have I done to you, that you should name that insolent intruder—A confident opinionative fop—No, indeed, if I am, as a poetical lover of mine sighed and sung of both sexes—

The public envy, and the public care.

I shan't be so easily caught—I thank him—I want but to be sure, I should heartily torment him, by banishing him, and then consider whether he should depart this life or not.

Lady *Char.* Indeed, sister, to be serious with you, this vanity in your humour does not at all become you.

Lady *Har.* Vanity! All the matter is, we gay people are more sincere than you wise folks; all your life's an art—Speak your soul—Look you there—[*Hauling her to the glass.*] Are you not struck with a secret pleasure, when you view that bloom in your look, that harmony in your shape, that promptitude of your mien!

Lady *Char.* Well, simpleton, if I am at first so silly as to be a little taken with myself, I know it a fault, and take pains to correct it.

Lady *Har.* Pshaw! pshaw! talk this musty tale to old Mrs. Fardingle, 'tis too soon for me to think at that rate.

Lady *Char.* They that think it too soon to understand themselves, will very soon find it too late—But tell me honestly, don't you like Campley?

Lady *Har.* The fellow is not to be abhorred, if the forward thing did not think of getting me so easily—Oh, I hate a heart I can't break when I please—What makes the value of dear china, but that 'tis so brittle!—Where it not for that, you might as well have stone mugs in your closet—

Lady *Char.* Hist, hist, here's Fardingle.

Enter FARDINGALE.

Far. Lady Harriot, Lady Charlotte—I'll entertain you now; I've a new song, just come hot out of the poet's brain. Lady Charlotte, my cousin Campley writ it, and it's set to a pretty air, I warrant you.

Lady Har. 'Tis like to be pretty indeed, of his writing. *[Flings away.]*

Far. Come, come, this is not one of your tringham tringham, witty things, that your poor poets write; no, 'tis well known my cousin Campley has two thousand pounds a year——But this is all dissimulation in you.

Lady Char. 'Tis so indeed, for your cousin's song is very pretty, Mrs. Fardingle. *[Reads.]*

*Let not love on me bestow,
Soft distress and tender woe;
Then pr'ythee give me, gentle boy,
None of thy grief, but all thy joy.*

But Harriot thinks that a little unreasonable, to expect one without enduring t' other,

Enter Servant.

Ser. There's your cousin Campley to wait on you without——

Far. Let him come in——We shall have the song now——

Enter CAMPLEY.

Camp. Ladies, your most obedient servant—Your

servant, lady Charlotte—servant, lady Harriot—[Harriot *looks grave upon him.*] What's the matter, dear lady Harriot—Not well? I protest to you I'm mightily concerned—[*Pulls out a bottle.*] This is a most excellent spirit—snuff it up, madam.

Lady Har. Pish—the familiar coxcomb frets me heartily——

Camp. 'T will be over, I hope, immediately.

Lady Char. Your cousin Fardingale has shewn us some of your poetry.

Camp. You should not have called it my poetry.

Far. Who waits there—Pray bring my lute out of the next room—[*Enter servant with a lute.*] You must know I conn'd this song before I came in, and find it will go to an excellent air of old Mr. Law's, who was my mother's intimate acquaintance: my mother's, what do I talk of? I mean my grand-mother's—Oh, here's the lute—Cousin Campley, hold the song upon your hat. [*Aside to him.*] 'T is a pretty gallantry to a relation.
[*Sings and squalls.*]

Let not love, &c.

Oh, I have left off these things many a day.

Camp. No;—but are not assured enough—Take it higher—[*In her own squall.*]—Thus—I know your voice will bear it.

Lady Har. Oh, hideous! Oh, the gross flatterer—I shall burst—Mrs. Fardingale, pray go on, the music fits the words most aptly—Take it higher, as your cousin advises.

Far. Oh, dear madam, do you really like it—I do purely to please you—for I can 't sing, alas!

Lady Char. We know it, good madam, we know it—But pray—

Far. Let not love, and substantial blisses, is lively enough, and ran accordingly in the tune. [*Curtseys to the company.*] Now I took it higher.

Lady Har. Incomparably done! nothing can equal it, except your cousin sang his own poetry.

Camp. Madam, from my Lord Hardy—[*Delivers a letter to Lady Charlotte.*] How do you say, my Lady Harriot, except I sing it myself! then I assure you I will.

Lady Char. I ha'n't patience, I must go read my letter. [*Exit.*]

Far. Bless me! what 's become of Lady Charlotte?

[*Exit.*]

Lady Har. Mrs. Fardingle, Mrs. Fardingle, what, must we lose you? [*Campley runs to the door, takes the key out, and locks her in.*] What means this insolence? a plot upon me. Do you know who I am?

Camp. Yes, madam, you're my Lady Harriot Lovely, with ten thousand pounds in your pocket; and I am Mr. Campley, worth two thousand a year—of quality enough to pretend to you—And I do design, before I leave this room, to hear you talk like a reasonable woman, as nature has made you. Nay, 't is in vain to flounce, and discompose yourself and your dress.

Lady Har. If there are swords, if they are men of

honour, and not all dastards, cowards that pretend to this injured person—— [Running round the room.

Camp. Ay, ay, madam, let 'em come—That 's putting me in my way, fighting 's my trade—but you 've used all mankind too ill to expect so much service—— in short, madam, were you a fool, I should not desire to expostulate with you—— [Seizing her band.

Lady Har. Unhand me, ravisher!—[Pulls her band from him, and runs round the room, Campley after her.

Camp. But, madam, madam, madam, why, madam!

Pr'ythee, Cynthia, look behind you, [Sings.

Age and wrinkles will o'ertake you.

Lady Har. Age, wrinkles, small-pox, nay, any thing that 's most abhorrent to youth and bloom, were welcome in the place of so detested a creature.

Camp. No such matter, Lady Harriot; I would not be a vain coxcomb, but I know I am not detestable, nay, know where you 've said as much, before you understood me for your servant. Was I immediately transformed because I became your lover?

Lady Har. My lover, sir? did I ever give you reason to think I admitted you as such?

Camp. Yes, you did in your using me ill—how do you answer yourself for some parts of your behaviour to me as a gentleman——Do but consider, madam, I have long loved you—bore with this fantastic humour through all its mazes—Nay, do not frown—for 't is no better—I love with too sincere, too honest a devotion, and would have your mind as faultless as

your person, which 't would be, if you 'll lay aside this vanity——[*She walks about less violently, but more confused.*] Had I not better tell you of it now, than when you were in my power; I should be then too generous to thwart your inclination.

Lady Har. That is indeed very handsomely said. Why should I not obey reason as soon as I see it—[*Aside.*] Since so, Mr. Campley, I can as ingenuously as I should then, acknowledge that I have been in an error.

[*Looking down on her fan.*]

Camp. Nay, that's too great a condescension. Oh, excellence! I repent! I see 't was but justice in you to demand my knees, [*Kneeling*] my sighs, my constant, tenderest regard and service—And you shall have 'em, since you are above 'em——

Lady Har. Nay, Mr. Campley, you won't rec'al me to a fault you have so lately shewn me—I will not suffer this——no more ecstasies! But pray, sir, what was 't you did to get my sister out of the room?

Camp. You may know it, and I must desire you to assist my Lord Hardy there, who writ to her by me—For he is no ravisher, as you called me just now.—He is now in the house—And I would fain gain an interview——

Lady Har. That they may have—But they 'll make little use of it: for the tongue is the instrument of speech to us of a lower form: they are of that high order of lovers, who know none but eloquent silence, and can utter themselves only by a gesture, that speaks

their passion inexpressible——and what not fine things.

Camp. But pray let 's go into your sister's closet, while they are together.

Lady Har. I swear I don't know how to see my sister—she 'll laugh me to death to see me out of my pantoufles, and you and I thus familiar——However, I know she 'll approve it.

Camp. You may boast yourself an heroine to her, and the first woman that was ever vanquished by hearing truth, and had sincerity enough to receive so rough an obligation, as being made acquainted with her faults—Come, madam, stand your ground bravely, we 'll march in to her thus.

[*She leaning on Campley.*

Lady Har. Who 'll believe a woman's anger more? I 've betray'd the whole sex to you, Mr. Campley,

[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Lord HARDY and CAMPLEY.

Camp. My lord, her sister, who now is mine, will immediately send her hither——But be yourself——Charge her bravely——I wish she were a cannon——an eighteen pounder for your sake——Then I know, were there occasion, you'd be in the mouth of her——

Lady Har. I long, yet fear to see her——I know I am unable to utter myself——

Camp. Come, retire here 'till she appears.

Enter Lady CHARLOTTE.

Lady *Char.* Now is the tender moment now approaching [*Aside.*] There he is [*They approach and salute each other, trembling.*] Your lordship will please to sit: [*After a very long pause, stolen glances, and irresolute gestures*] your lordship, I think, has travelled those parts of Italy, where the armies are——

L. *Hardy.* Yes, madam.

Lady *Char.* I think I have letters from you, dated Mantua.

L. *Hardy.* I hope you have, madam—and that their purpose——

Lady *Char.* My lord? [*Looking serious and confused.*]

L. *Hardy.* Was not your ladyship going to say something?

Lady *Char.* I only attended to what your lordship was going to say—that is, my lord—But you were, I believe, going to say something of that garden of the world, Italy—I am very sorry your misfortunes in England are such as make you justly regret your leaving that place.

L. *Hardy.* There is a person in England may make those losses insensible to me.

Lady *Char.* Indeed, my lord, there have so very few of quality attended his majesty in the war, that your birth and merit may well hope for his favour.

L. *Hardy.* I have, indeed, all the zeal in the world for his majesty's service, and most grateful affection for his person, but did not then mean him.

Lady Char. But can you indeed impartially say that our island is really preferable to the rest of the world, or is it arrogance only in us to think so?

L. Hardy. I profess, madam, that little I have seen has but more endeared England to me; for that medley of humours which perhaps distracts our public affairs, does, methinks, improve our private lives, and makes conversation more various, and consequently more pleasing—Every where else, both men and things have the same countenance.—In France you meet with much civility and little friendship; in Holland, deep attention, but little reflection; in Italy, all pleasure, but no mirth—But here with us, where you have every where pretenders, or masters in every thing, you can't fall into company, wherein you shall not be instructed or diverted.

Lady Char. I never had an account of any thing from you, my lord, but I mourned the loss of my brother—you would have been so happy a companion for him—With that right sense of yours—My lord, you need not bow so obsequiously, for I do you but justice—But you sent me word of your seeing a lady in Italy very like me—Did you visit her often?

L. Hardy. Once or twice; but I observed her so loose a creature, that I could have killed her for having your person.

Lady Char. I thank you, sir; but Heaven that preserves me unlike her, will, I hope, make her more like me—But your fellow-traveller—His relations themselves know not a just account of him.

L. *Hardy*. The original cause of his fever was a violent passion for a fine young woman he had not power to speak to—but I told her his regard for her as passionately as possible.

Lady *Char*. You were to him, what Mr. Campley has been to you—Whither am I running—Poor—your friend—Poor Gentleman.

L. *Hardy*. I hope, then, as Campley's eloquence is greater, so has been his success.

Lady *Char*. My lord?

L. *Hardy*. Your ladyship's——

Enter Lady HARRIOT.

Lady *Har*. Undone! undone! Tattleaid has found, by some means or other, that Campley brought my Lord Hardy hither; we are utterly ruined, my lady's coming——

L. *Hardy*. I'll stay and confront her.

Lady *Char*. It must not be—we are too much in her power.

Enter CAMPLEY.

Camp. Come, come, my lord, we're routed horse and foot—Down the back stairs, and so out.

[*Exeunt.*

Ladies. Ay, ay——

Lady *Har*. I tremble every joint of me——

Lady *Char*. I'm at a stand a little, but rage will recover me; she's coming in——

Enter WIDOW.

Wid. Ladies, your servant—I fear I interrupt you, have you company? Lady Harriot, your servant, Lady Charlotte, your servant? What, not a word?—Oh, I beg your ladyship's pardon—Lady Charlotte did I say? My young Lady Brumpton, I wish you joy.

Lady Char. Oh, your servant, Lady Dowager Brumpton—That's an appellation of much more joy to you——

Wid. So smart, madam; but you should, methinks, have made one acquainted—Yet, madam, your conduct is seen through——

Lady Char. My conduct, Lady Brumpton!

Wid. Your conduct, Lady Charlotte!

[Coming up to each other.]

Lady Char. Madam, 't is you are seen through all your thin disguises——

Wid. I seen! By whom?

Lady Char. By an all-piercing eye; nay, by what you much more fear, the eye of the world—The world sees you, or shall see you: it shall know your secret intemperance, your public fasting—Loose poems in your closet, an homily on your toilette—Your easy skilful practised hypocrisy, by which you wrought on your husband basely to transfer the trust and ward of us, two helpless virgins, into the hands and care of—I cannot name it—You 're a wicked woman.

Lady Har. [*Aside.*] Oh, rare sister! 'T is a fine thing to keep one's anger in stock by one; we that

are angry and pleased every half hour, have nothing at all of this high-flown fury ! Why, she rages like a princess in a tragedy ! Blessings on her tongue——

Wid. Is this the effect of your morning lectures, your self-examination, all this fury ?

Lady Char. Yes, it is madam ; if I take pains to govern my passions, it shall not give licence to others to govern 'm for me——

Wid. Well, Lady Charlotte, however you ill deserve it of me, I shall take care, while there are locks and bars, to keep you from Lord Hardy—From being a leger lady, from carrying a knapsack.

Lady Char. Knapsack ! do you upbraid the poverty your own wicked arts have brought him to—Knapsack ! Oh, grant me patience, can I hear this of the man I love ? Knapsack ! I have not words.

[*Stamps about the room.*]

Wid. I leave you to cool upon it ; love and anger are very warm passions—— [Exit.]

Lady Har. She has locked us in——

Lady Char. Knapsack ! Well, I will break walls to go to him—I could sit down and cry my eyes out ! Dear sister, what a rage have I been in. Knapsack ! I'll give vent to my just resentment—Oh, how shall I avoid this base woman, how meet that excellent man ! —I hope 't is in fate to crown our loves ; for it is only in the protection of men of honour, that we are naturally truly safe :——

And woman's happiness, for all her scorn,

Is only by that side whence she was born. [Exeunt,

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Lord HARDY, CAMPLEY, and TRIM.

L. Hardy.

THAT jade Tattleaid saw me upon the stairs, for I had not patience to keep my concealment, but must peep out to see what was become of you.

Camp. But we have advice, however, it seems, from the garrison already—This mistress of Trim's is a mighty lucky accident——

Trim. Ay, gentlemen, she has free egress and regress, and you know the French are the best bred people in the world—she 'll be assistant—but, faith, I have one scruple that hangs about me—and that is—Look you, my lord, we servants have no masters in their absence—In a word, when I am with mademoiselle, I talk of your lordship as only a particular acquaintance, that I do business, indeed, for you sometimes—I must needs say, cries I, that, indeed, my Lord Hardy is really a person I have a great honour for.

L. Hardy. Pish! is that all?—I understand you—your mistress does not know that you do me the honour to clean my shoes or so, upon occasion—Pr'ythee, Will, make yourself as considerable as you please.

Trim. Well then, your lesson is this—She out of her respect to me, and understanding Mr. Campley was an intimate of my friend my Lord Hardy, and

condescending (though she is of a great house in France) to make mantuas for the improvement of the English—which gives her easy admittance—She, I say, moved by these promises, has vouchsafed to bring a letter from my Lady Harriot to Mr. Campley, and came to me to bring her to him. You are to understand, also, that she is dressed in the latest French cut; her dress is the model of their habit, and herself of their manners—for she is——But you shall see her—
[Exit.]

L. Hardy. This gives me some life!—Cheer up, Tom—but behold the solemnity—Do you see Trim's gallantry? I shall laugh out.

Enter TRIM leading in MADEMOISELLE.

Trim. My dear Lord Hardy, this is Mademoiselle d'Epingle, whose name you've often heard me sigh—
[Lord Hardy salutes her.] Mr. Campley, Mademoiselle d'Epingle.
[Campley salutes her.]

Madem. Votre servante, gentlemen, votre servante.

Camp. I protest to you I never saw any thing so becoming as your dress—shall I beg the favour you'd condescend to let Mr. Trim lead you once round the room, that I may admire the elegance of your habit.

[Trim leads her round.]

L. Hardy. How could you ask such a thing?

Camp. Pshaw, my lord, you're a bashful English fellow—You see she is not surprised at it—Oh, madam, your air!—The negligence, the disengagement of your manner! Oh, how delicate is your noble

nation—When shall you see an English woman so dressed?

Madem. De Englise! poor barbarians, poor savages, dey know no more of de dress, but to cover dere nakedness [*Glides along the room.*] Dey be cloded, but no dressed—But, Monsieur Terim, which Monsieur Campley?

Trim. That 's honest Tom Campley——

Camp. At your service, Mademoiselle——

Madem. I fear I incur de censure, [*Pulling out the letter, and recollecting as loth to deliver it.*] but Mr. Terim being your intimate friend, and I designing to honour him in de way of an husband—So, so, how do I run away in discourse—I never make promise to Mr. Terim before, and now do it par accident——

Camp. Dear Will Trim is extremely obliging in having prevailed upon you to do a thing, that the severity of your virtue, and the greatness of your quality (though a stranger in the country you now honour by your dwelling in it), would not let you otherwise condescend to——

Madem. Oh, monsieur! Oh, monsieur! you speak my very thoughts—Oh, I don't know how! Pardon me to give a billet—it so look! Oh, fy! I cannot stay after it—[*Drops it, runs affectedly to the other end of the room, then quite out, re-enters.*] I beg ten thousand pardons for go so mal-a-propos. [*Curtisies as going,*

L. Har. Your servant, good madam—Mr. Trim, you know you command here—pray, if Madame d'Epingle will honour our cottage with longer stay,

wait on her in and entertain her—Pray, sir, be free—

Trim. My lord, you know your power over me, I'm all complaisance—— [Leads her out.

Camp. Now to my dear epistle——

‘ Sir,

‘ There is one thing which you were too generous to touch upon in our last conversation—We have reason to fear the widow’s practices in relation to our fortune, if you are not too quick for her—I ask lady Charlotte whether this is not her sense to Lord Hardy—She says nothing, but lets me write on——These people always have, and will have admittance every where, therefore we may hear from you.

‘ I am, Sir,

‘ Your most obedient servant,

HARRIOT LOVELY.’

‘ My obedient servant ! Thy obedience shall ever be as voluntary as now—ten thousand thousand kisses on thee——Thou dear paper——Look you, my lord——What a pretty hand it is ?

L. Hardy. Why, Tom, thou dost not give me leave to see it——you snatch it to your mouth so——you’ll stifle the poor lady——

Camp. Look you, my lord, all along the lines, here went the pen, and through the white intervals her snowy fingers. Do you see, this is her name——

L. Hardy. Nay, there’s lady Charlotte’s name too in the midst of the letter——Why, you’ll not be so

unconscionable—you're so greedy—you'll give me one kiss, sure——

Camp. Well, you shall; but you're so eager—don't bite me—for you sha'n't have it in your hands—there, there, there—Let go my hand——

L. Hardy. What an exquisite pleasure there is in this foolery——But what shall we do?

Camp. I have a thought? pr'ythee, my lord, call Trim.

L. Hardy. Ha, Trim——

Camp. Hold, Mr. Trim—You forget his mistress is there.

L. Hardy. Gra'mercy—Dear Will Trim, step in hither.

Camp. Ay, that's something——

Enter TRIM.

Trim, have not I seen a young woman sometimes carry Madame d'Epingle's trinkets for her, coming from my lady Brumpton's.

Trim. Yes, you might have seen such a one, she waits for her now.

Camp. Do you think you could not prevail for me to be dressed in that wench's clothes and attend your mistress in her stead thither? They'll not dream we should so soon attend again.

Trim. Yes, I'll engage.

Camp. Then, we'll trust the rest to our good genius; I'll about it instantly——Harriot Lovely——

[*Exeunt, kissing the letter.*]

Enter WIDOW and TATTLEAID.

Wid. This was well done of you ; be sure you take care of their young ladyships ; you shall, I promise you, have a'snip in the sale of them.

Tat. I thank your good ladyship.

Wid. Is that the porter's paper of how-d'ye's ?

Tat. Yes, Madam, he just sent it up ; his general answer is, that you are as well as can be expected in your condition ; but that you see nobody.

Wid. That's right—[*Reading names*] Lady Riggle, Lady Formal—Oh, that Riggle ! a pert ogler—an indiscreet, silly thing, who is really known by no man, yet for her carriage justly thought common to all ; and as Formal has only the appearance of virtue, so she has only the appearance of vice——What chance, I wonder, put these contradictions to each other into the same coach, as you say they called——Mrs. Frances and Mrs. Winnifred Glebe, who are they ?

Tat. They are the country great fortunes, have been out of town this whole year ; they are those whom your ladyship said upon being very well-born, took upon them to be very ill bred.

Wid. Did I say so ? Really I think it was apt enough ; now I remember them——Lady Wrinkle : Oh, that smug old woman ! there is no enduring her affectation of youth ; but I plague her ; I always ask whether her daughter in Wiltshire has a grandchild yet or not——Lady Worth : I can't bear her company, she has so

much of that virtue in her heart, which I have in my mouth only. [*Aside.*]—Mrs. After-day : Oh, that's she that was the great beauty, the mighty toast about town, that's just come out of the small-pox ; she is horribly pitted, they say ; I long to see her, and plague her with my condolence. 'Tis a pure ill-natured satisfaction to see one that was a beauty unfortunately move with the same languor, and softness of behaviour, that once was charming in her ; to see, I say, her mortify, that used to kill : ha, ha, ha !—The rest are a catalogue of mere names or titles they were born to ; an insipid crowd of neither good nor bad. But you are sure these other ladies suspect not in the least that I know of their coming ?

Tat. No, dear Madam ; they are to ask for me.

Wid. I hear a coach—[*Exit. Tat.*] I have now an exquisite pleasure in the thought of surpassing my Lady Sly, who pretends to have out-grieved the whole town for her husband. They are certainly coming. Oh, no ! here let me—thus let me sit and think—[*Widow on her couch ; while she is raving, as to herself, Tattleaid softly introduces the ladies.*] Wretched, disconsolate as I am ! Oh, welcome, welcome, dear, killing anguish ! Oh, that I could lie down and die in my present heaviness ! But what—how ? Nay, my dear, dear lord, why do you look so pale, so ghastly at me ? Wottoo, wottoo ! fright thy own trembling, shivering wife—

Tat. Nay, good Madam, be comforted.

Wid. Thou shalt not have me—[*Pushes Tat.*]

Tat. Nay, good Madam, 'tis I, 'tis I, your ladyship's own woman. 'Tis I, Madam, that dress you, talk to you, and tell you all that's done in the house every day; 'tis I——

Wid. Is it then possible? Is it then possible that I am left? Speak to me not, hold me not; I'll break the listening walls with my complaints [*Looks surprised at seeing the company, then severely at Tattleaid.*] Ah, Tattleaid!——

1st Lady. Nay, Madam, be not angry at her; we would come in spite of her; we are your friends, and are as concerned as you are.

Wid. Ah, Madam, Madam, Madam, Madam, I am an undone woman! Oh, me! alas, alas! Oh, Oh! [*All join in her notes.*] I swoon! I expire! [*Faints.*]

2d Lady. Pray, Mrs. Tattleaid, bring something that is cordial to her. [*Exit Tattleaid.*]

3d Lady. Indeed, Madam, you should have patience; his lordship was old. To die is but going before in a journey we must all take.

Enter TATTLEAID, loaded with bottles; 3d Lady takes a bottle from her and drinks.

4th Lady. Lord, how my Lady Fleer drinks! I have heard, indeed, but never could believe it of her.

[*Drinks also.*]

1st Lady. But, Madam, don't you hear what the town says of the jilt, Flirt, the men liked so much in the Park?——Hark ye——was seen with him in a

hackney coach——and silk stockings——key-hole——
his wig——on the chair—— [Whispers by interruption.

2d Lady. Impudent flirt, to be found out!

3d Lady. But I speak it only to you.

4th Lady. Nor I, but to one more.

[Whispers next woman.

5th Lady. I can't believe it; nay, I always thought
it, Madam. [Whispers the Widow.

Wid. Sure 'tis impossible! the demure, prim thing
—Sure all the world is hypocrisy—Well, I thank
my stars, whatsoever sufferings I have, I have none in
my reputation. I wonder at the men; I could never
think her handsome. She has really a good shape and
complexion, but no mein; and no woman has the use
of her beauty without mien. Her charms are dumb,
they want utterance. But whither does distraction
lead me to talk of charms?

1st Lady. Charms! a chit's, a girl's charms!—
Come, let us widows be true to ourselves; keep our
countenances and our characters, and a fig for the
maids, I mean the unmarried.

2d Lady. Ay, since they will set up for our know-
ledge, why should not we for their ignorance?

3d Lady. But, Madam, o' Sunday morning at
church, I curtsied to you, and looked at a great fuss
in a glaring light dress, next pew. That strong,
masculine thing is a knight's wife, pretends to all the
tenderness in the world, and would fain put the un-
wieldily upon us, for the soft, the languid. She has

of a sudden left her dairy, and set up for a fine town lady; calls her maid Cisly, her woman, speaks to her by her surname of Mrs. Cherryfist, and her great foot-boy of nineteen, big enough for a trooper, is stripped into a lace coat, now Mr. Page, forsooth.

4th Lady. Oh, I have seen her—Well, I heartily pity some people for their wealth; they might have been unknown else——You would die, Madam, to see her and her equipage: I thought the honest fat tits, her horses, were ashamed of their finery; they dragged on, as if they were all at plough, and a great bashful-look'd booby behind, grasp'd the coach, as if he had held one.

5th Lady. Alas! some people think there is nothing but being fine to be genteel: but the high prance of the horses, and the brisk insolence of the servants in an equipage of quality, are inimitable: but to our own beasts and servants,

1st Lady. Now you talk of an equipage, I envy this lady the beauty she will appear in in a mourning coach, it will so become her complexion; I confess I myself mourned for two years for no other reason. Take up that hood there. Oh, that fair face with a veil.

[*They take up her hood.*]

Wid. Fie, fie, ladies!——But I have been told, indeed, black does become——

2d Lady. Well, I'll take the liberty to speak it, there is young Nutbrain has long had (I'll be sworn) a passion for this lady: but I'll tell you one thing. I fear she'll dislike, that is, he is younger than she is.

3d Lady. No, that's no exception; but I'll tell you one, he is younger than his brother.

Wid. Ladies, talk not of such affairs. Who could love such an unhappy relict as I am? But, dear Madam, what grounds have you for that idle story?

4th Lady. Why, he toasts you, and trembles where you are spoke of. It must be a match.

Wid. Nay, nay, you rally; you rally; but I know you mean it kindly.

1st Lady. I swear we do.

[Tattleaid *whispers the Widow.*

Wid. But I must beseech you, ladies, since you have been so compassionate as to visit and accompany my sorrow, to give me the only comfort I can now know, to see my friends chearful, and to honour an entertainment Tattleaid has prepared within for you. If I can find strength enough, I'll attend you; but I wish you would excuse me, for I have no relish of food or joy, but will try to get a bit down in my own chamber.

1st Lady. There is no pleasure without you.

Wid. But, Madam, I must beg of your ladyship not to be so importune to my fresh calamity, as to mention Nutbrain any more. I am sure there is nothing in it. In love with me, quoth-a!

[*Is led off.*

[*Exeunt Ladies, &c.*

Enter MADEMOISELLE, and CAMPLEY in woman's clothes, carrying her things.

Madem. I am very glad to be in de ladies anti

chamber; I was shamed of you, you yon such impudent look: besides, me wonder you were not seized by the constable, when you pushed de man into de kennel.

Camp. Why, should I have let him kissed me?

Madem. No; but if you had hit him wit fan, and say, why, sure, saucy-box, it been enough; beside, what you hitted de gentleman for offer kisse me?

Camp. I beg pardon, I did not know you were pleased with it.

Madem. Please! no; but me rader be kisse den you, Mr. Terim's friend be found out. Could not you say, when he kisse me, sure, sauce-box, dat's meat for your master. Besides, you take such strides when you walk—Oh, fie! dese little pette tiny bits a woman steps.

[*Shewing her step.*]

Camp. But, pr'ythee, Mademoiselle, why have you lost your English tongue, all of a sudden? Methought, when the fellow called us French whores as we came along, and said we came to starve their own people, you gave them pretty plain English; he was a dog, a rascal, you'd send to the stocks——

Madem. Ha, ha, ha! I was in a passion, and betrayed myself; but you are my lover's friend, and a man of honour, therefore know you will do nothing to injure us. Why, Mr. Campley, you must know I can speak as good English as you; but I don't, for fear of losing my customers: the English will never give a price for any thing they understand. Nay, I have known some of your fools pretend to buy with

good-breeding, and give any rate, rather than not be thought to have French enough to know what they are doing ; strange and far-fetched things they only like ; don't you see how they swallow gallons of the juice of tea, while their own dock-leaves are trod under foot. Mum—my Lady Harriot.

Enter Lady HARRIOT.

Madame, votre servante, servante——

Lady Har. Well, Mademoiselle, did you deliver my letter ?

Madem. Oui——

Lady Har. Well, and how ? Is that it in your hand.

Madem. Oui——

Lady Har. Well, then, why don't you give it me ?

Madem. Oh, fie, lady ! dat be so right Englise ; de Englise mind ohly de words of de lovers, but de words of de lovers are often lie, but de action no lie.

Lady Har. What does the thing mean ? Give me my letter.

Madem. Me did not deliver your letter.

Lady Har. No.

Madem. No, me tell you me did drop it to see Mr. Campley, how cavalier take it up. As dese me did drop it, so Monsieur run to take it up.

[They both run to take it up, Madem. takes it up.]

Dus he do——dere de letter——Very well, very well. Oh, l'amour ! You act de manner Mr. Campley——take it up better than I ; do you not see it ?

[They both run, Harriot gets it.]

Lady Har. [*Reads.*]

‘ Madam,

‘ I am glad you have mentioned what indeed I did not at that time think of, nor if I had should I have known how to have spoken of. But bless me more than fortune can, by turning those fair eyes upon, Madam,

‘ Your most faithful,

‘ Most obedient humble servant,

‘ THOMAS CAMPLEY.’

What does he mean?—But bless me more, by turning—Oh, ’tis he himself! [*Looking about, observes Camp. smile.*] Oh, the hoydon! the romp!—I did not think any thing could add to your native confidence; but you look so very bold in that dress, and your arms fall off, and your petticoats, how they hang——

Camp. Mademoiselle voulez vous de salville l’eau de Hongrie, chez Monsieur Marchant de Montpellier—Dis for your teet. [*Shewing his trinkets.*] De essence, a little book French for teach de elder brothers make compliments. Will you, I say, have any thing that I have? Will you have all I have, Madam?

Lady Har. Yes, and for the humour’s sake, will never part with this box while I live. Ha, ha, ha!

Camp. But, Lady Harriot, we must not stand laughing; as you observe in your letter, delays are dangerous in this wicked woman’s custody of you; therefore, I must, Madam, beseech you, and pray, stay not on niceties, but be advised.



THE FUNERAL.



Roberts delin.

Cooper

M. DODD as CAMPLEY,

But you look so very bold in that dress.

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand Decr 1794.

Lady Har. Mr. Campley, I have no will but yours.

Camp. Thou dear creature!—But [*Kisses her hand.*] hark'e, then you must change dresses with Mademoiselle, and go with me instantly.

Lady Har. What you please.

Camp. Madame d'Epingle, I must desire you to comply with a humour of gallantry of ours: you may be sure I'll have an eye over the treatment you have upon my account—only to change habits with Lady Harriot, and let her go while you stay.

Madem. Wit all my heart [*Offers to undress herself.*

Lady Har. What, before Mr. Campley?

Madem. Oh, Oh, very Anglaise! Dat is so Englise; all women of quality in France are dress and undress by a valet de chambre, de man chamber-maid help complexion better den de woman. [*Apart to Har.*

Lady Har. Nay, that's a secret in dress, Mademoiselle, I never knew before; and am so unpolished an English-woman, as to resolve never to learn even to dress before my husband. Oh, indecency! Mr. Campley, do you hear what Mademoiselle says?—

Madem. Oh, hist!—Bagatelle.

Lady Har. Well, we'll run in, and be ready in an instant. [*Exeunt Lady Harriot and Mademoiselle.*

Camp. Well, I like her every minute better and better. What a delicate chastity she has! There is something so gross in the carriage of some wives, (tho' they are honest too) that they lose their husbands hearts for faults, which, if they have either good nature or good-breeding, they know not how to tell

them of. But, how happy am I in such a friend as Hardy, such a mistress as Harriot !

*Continue, Heav'n, a grateful heart to bless,
With faith in friendship, and in love success.* [Exit.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter WIDOW and TRUSTY.

Widow.

MR. Trusty, you have, I do assure you, the same place and power in the management of my Lord Brumpton's estate, as in his life time. I am reduced to a necessity of trusting him. [*Aside.*] However Tattleaid dissembles the matter, she must be privy to Lady Harriot's escape, and Fardingle is as deep as them both, and I fear will be their ruin, which it is my care and duty to prevent. Be vigilant, and you shall be rewarded. I shall employ you wholly in Lady Charlotte's affairs, she is able to pay services done for both. You have sense, and understand me.

[Exit Widow.]

Trusty. Yes, I do indeed understand you, and could wish another could with as much detestation as I do ; but my poor old lord is so strangely, so bewitchedly enamoured of her, that even after this discovery of her wickedness, I see he could be reconciled to her ; and though he is ashamed to confess to me, I know he longs to speak with her. If I tell lord Hardy all, to make

his fortune, he would not let his father be dishonoured by a public way of separation. If things are acted privately, I know she will throw us all; there is no middle way; I must expose her, to make a re-union impracticable.

Enter Lord HARDY, CAMPLEY, and TRIM.

L. Hardy. I forget my own misfortunes, dear Campley, when I reflect on your success.

Camp. I assure you it moderates the swell of joy that I am in, to think of your difficulties. I hope my felicity is previous to yours: my lady Harriot gives her service to you, and we both think it but decent to suspend our marriage, till your and lady Charlotte's affairs are in the same posture.

L. Hardy. Where is my lady?

Camp. She is at my aunt's, my lord. But, my lord, if you don't interpose, I don't know how I shall adjust matters with Mr. Trim, for leaving his mistress behind me; I fear he'll demand satisfaction of me.

Trim. No, sir; alas, I can know no satisfaction while she is in jeopardy! therefore would rather be put in a way to recover her by storming the castle, or other feat of arms, like a true enamoured swain as I am.

Enter Boy.

Boy. There is one Mr. Trusty below, would speak with my lord.

L. Hardy. Mr. Trusty, my father's steward! What can he have to say to me?

Camp. He is very honest, to my knowledge.

L. Hardy. I remember, indeed, when I was turned out of the house, he followed me to the gate, and wept over me, for which, I have heard, he had like to have lost his place. But, however, I must advise with you a little, about my behaviour to him. Let us in. Boy bring him up hither; tell him I'll wait on him presently.—[*Exit Boy.*—] I shall want you I believe here, Trim. [Exit.]

Re-enter Boy and TRUSTY.

Boy. My lord will wait on you here immediately.

[Exit.]

Trusty. 'Tis very well. These lodgings are but homely for the Earl of Brumpton. Oh, that damned strumpet! that I should ever know my master's wife for such. How many thousand things does my head run back to? After my poor father's death, the good lord took me, because he was a Captain in his regiment, and gave me education, I was, I think, three and twenty when this young lord was christened—What ado there was about calling him Francis! [*Wipes his eyes.*] These are but poor lodgings for him. I cannot bear the joy, to think that I shall save the family from which I have had my bread.

Enter TRIM.

Trim. Sir, my lord will wait on you immediately.

Trusty. Sir, 'tis my duty to wait on him—[*As Trim is going.*] But, sir, are not you the young man.

that attended him at Christ-church, in Oxford, and have followed him ever since ?

Trim. Yes, sir, I am.

Trusty. Nay, sir, no harm; but you'll thrive the better for it.

Trim. I like this old fellow; I smell more money.

[*Aside.*]

[*Exit.*]

Trusty. I think it is now eight years since I saw him; he was not then nineteen, when I followed him to the gate, and gave him fifty guineas, which I pretended his father sent after him.

Enter Lord HARDY.

L. Hardy. Mr. Trusty, I am very glad to see you; you look very hale and jolly; you wear well; I am glad to see it—But your commands to me, Mr. Trusty?

Trusty. Why, my lord, I presume to wait upon your lordship—My lord, you are strangely grown; you are your father's very picture; you are he, my lord; you are the very man that looked so pleased to see me look so fine in my laced livery to go to Court. I was his page, when he was just such another as you. He kissed me afore a great many lords, and said I was a brave man's son, that had taught him to exercise his arms. I remember he carried me to the great window, and bid me be sure to keep in your mother's sight in all my finery. She was the finest young creature; the maids of honour hated to see her at Court. My lord then courted my good lady. She was as kind to me on

her death-bed; she said to me, Mr. Trusty, take care of my lord's second marriage, for that child's sake: she pointed as well as she could to you; you fell a crying, and said she should not die; but she did; my lord; she left the world, and no one like her in it. Forgive me, my honoured master, [*Weeps, runs to my lord, and hugs him.*] I've often carried you in these arms that grasp you, they were stronger then; but if I die to-morrow, you're worth five thousand pounds by my gift; 'tis what I've got in the family, and I return it to you with thanks——But, alas, do I live to see you want it?

L. Hardy. You confound me with all this tenderness and generosity.

Trusty. I'll trouble you no longer, my lord—but——

L. Hardy. Call it not a trouble; for——

Trusty. My good lord, I will not, I say, indulge myself in talking fond tales, that melt me, and interrupt my story—my business to your lordship, in one word, is this; I am in good confidence at present with my Lady Dowager, and I know she has some fears upon her, which depend upon the nature of the settlement to your disfavour; and, under the rose——be yourself——I fear your father has not had fair play for his life—be composed, my lord. What is to be done in this?—We'll not apply to public justice in this case, till we see farther, 't will make it noisy, which we must not do, if I might advise. You shall, with a detachment of your company, seize the corpse as it goes out of the house this evening to be interred in the country, 't will only look like taking the administration upon yourself,

and commencing a suit for the estate ; she has put off the lying in state, and Lady Harriot's escape with Mr. Campley makes her fear he will prove a powerful friend, both to the young ladies and your lordship.—She cannot with decency be so busy, as when the corpse is out of the house, therefore hastens it. I know your whole affair; leave the care of Lady Charlotte to me, I'll pre-acquaint her, that she may 'n't be frightened, and dispose of her safety to observe the issue.

L. Hardy. I wholly understand you, it shall be done.

Trusty. I'm sure I am wanted this moment for your interest at home. This ring shall be the passport of intelligence, from whom you send to assault us, and the remittance of it sealed with this, shall be authentic from within the house.

L. Hardy. 'T is very well.

Trusty. Hope all you can wish, my lord, from a certain secret relating to the estate, which I'll acquaint you with next time I see you. [Exit.

L. Hardy. Your servant—This fellow's strangely honest—Ha! Will,

Enter CAMPLEY and TRIM.

Will, do n't the recruits wait for me to see them at their parade before this house?

Trim. Yes, and have waited these three hours.

L. Hardy. Go to them, I'll be there myself immediately: we must attack with them, if the rogues are sturdy, this very evening.

Trim., I guess where—I'm overjoy'd at it. I'll warrant you they'll do it if I command in chief.

L. Hardy. I design you shall.

[*Trim runs out jumping.*]

Camp. You seem, my lord, to be in deep meditation.

L. Hardy. I am so, but not on any thing that you may not be acquainted with. [Exit.]

Enter TRIM, with a Company of ragged fellows, with a cane.

1st. Sol. Why then I find, Mr. Trim, we shall come to blows before we see the French——

Trim. Hark'e, friend, 'tis not your affair to guess or enquire what you are going to do, 'tis only for us commanders——

2d Sol. The French! pox—they are but a company of scratching civet-cats——They fight!

Trim. Hark'e, do n't bluster—were not you a little mistaken in your facings at Steenkirk?

2d Sol. I grant it; you know I have an antipathy to the French—I hate to see the dogs—Look you here, gentlemen, I was shot quite through the body——Look you.

Trim. Pry'thee, look, where it entered at your back.

2d Sol. Look you, Mr. Trim, you will have your joke, we know you are a wit——But what's that to a fighting man?

Enter KATE.

Kate. Mr. Trim——Mr. Trim——

Trim. Things are not as they have been, Mrs. Kate, I now pay the company—and we that pay money expect a little more ceremony——

Kate. Will your honour please to taste some right French brandy?

Trim. Art thou sure, good woman, 'tis right?—
[*Drinks.*] How—French—pray—nay, if I find you deceive me, who pay the men—— [Drinks.]

Kate. Pray, good master, have you spoke to my lord about me?

Trim. I have, but you shall speak to him yourself—thou hast been a true campaigner, Kate, and we must not neglect thee—Do you sell grey pease yet of an evening, Mrs. Matchlock—— [Drinks again.]

Kate. Any thing to turn the penny; but I got more money by crying pamphlets this year, than by any thing I have done a great while——Now I am married into the company again, I design to cross the seas next year. But, master, my husband, a Temple porter, and a Parliament-man's footman, last night by their talk made me think there was danger of a peace; why, they said all the prime people were against a war.

Trim. No, no, Kate, never fear, you know I keep great company; all men are for war, but some would have it abroad, and some would have it at home in their own country.

Kate. Ay, say you so?—Drink about, gentlemen, not a farthing to pay; a war is a war, be it where it will——But pray, Mr. Trim, speak to my lord, that when these gentlemen have shirts I may wash for them.

Trim. I tell you, if you believe well to-night, you shall have a fortnight's pay each man as a reward; but there's none of you industrious—there's a thousand things you might do to help out about this town—as to cry—puff—puff pies. Have you any knives or scissars to grind—or late in an evening, whip from Grub-street, strange and bloody news from Flanders—votes from the House of Commons—buns, rare buns—old silver lace, cloaks, suits, or coats—old shoes, boots, or hats. But here, here, here's my lord, a coming—here's the captain; fall back into the rank.—There, move up in the centre.

Enter Lord HARDY and CAMPLEY.

L. Hardy. Let me see whether my ragged friends are ready and about me.

Kate. Ensign Campley, Ensign Campley, I am overjoyed to see your honour—ha! the world's surely altered, ha!

Camp. It is so, 'faith, Kate; why, art thou true to the cause, with the company still, honest Amazon!

Kate. Dear soul, not a bit of pride in him; but won't your honour help me in my business with my lord?—Speak for me, noble ensign, do.

Camp. Speak to him yourself, I'll second you.

Kate. Noble captain, my lord, I suppose Mr. Trim has told your honour about my petition: I have been a great sufferer in the service; 't is hard for a poor woman to lose nine husbands in a war, and no notice taken; nay, three of them, alas! in the same campaign: here the woman stands that says it, I never

stripped a man 'till I first tried if he could stand on his legs, and if not, I think 'twas fair plunder, except our adjutant, and he was a puppy that made my eighth husband run the gauntlet for not turning his toes out.

L. *Hardy*. Well, we 'll consider thee, Kate ; but fall back into the rear. A roll of what ? gentlemen soldiers.

Trim to Bumpkin.] Do your hear that, my lord himself can 't deny but we are all gentlemen, as much as his honour.

L. *Hardy, reading.*] Gentlemen soldiers quartered in and about Guy-Court in Vinegar-Yard, in Russel-Court in Drury-Lane ; belonging to the honourable captain Hardy's company of foot——So, answer to your names, and march off from the left——Corporal Swagger, march easy that I may view you as you pass by me ; drums, Simon Ruffle, Darby Tatoo——there's a shilling for you——Tattoo, be always so tight : how does he keep himself so clean ?

Trim. Sir, he is a tragedy-drum to one of the play-houses.

L. *Hardy*. Private gentlemen——Alexander Cowitch, Humphrey Mundungus, William Faggot, Nicholas Scab, Timothy Megrim, Philip Scratch, Nehemiah Dust, Humphrey Garbage, Nathaniel Matchlock.

Camp. What, is Matchlock come back to the company ? that 's the fellow that brought me off at Steenkirk.

L. Hardy. No, sir, 't is I am obliged to him for that [*Offering to give him money*]; there, friend: you shall want for nothing, I'll give thee a halbert too.

Kate. O brave me! shall I be a serjeant's lady—i'faith I'll make the drums, and the corporals wives, and company-keepers know their distance.

Match. I was whipt from constable to constable—

Trim. Ay, my lord, that's due by the courtesy of England to all that want in red coats; besides, there's an act that makes us free of all corporations, and that's the ceremony of it.

Camp. But what pretence had they for using you so ill, you did not pilfer?

Match. I was found guilty of being poor.

Camp. Poor devil!

L. Hardy. Timothy Ragg—Oh, Ragg! I thought when I gave you your discharge, just before the peace, we should never have had you again; how came you to list now?

Ragg. To pull down the French king.

L. Hardy. Bravely resolved—but pull your shirt into your breeches, in the mean time—Jeoffrey Tatter—what's become of the skirts and buttons of your coat?

Tatter. In our last clothing, in the regiment I served in before, the colonel had one skirt before, the agent one behind, and every captain of the regiment a button.

L. Hardy. Hush, you rogue, you talk mutiny.

[*Smiling,*

Trim. Ay, sirrah, what have you to do with more knowledge than that of your right hand from your left? [*Hits him a blow on the head.*]

L. Hardy. Hugh Clump—Clump, thou growest a little too heavy for marching.

Trim. Ay, my lord, but if we don't allow him the pay, he'll starve, for he's too lame to get into the hospital.

L. Hardy. Richard Bumpkin: Ha! a perfect country hick—how came you, friend, to be a soldier?

Bump. An't please your honour, I have been crossed in love, and am willing to seek my fortune.

L. Hardy. Well, I've seen enough of them: if you mind your affair, and act like a wise general, these fellows may do—come, take your order. [*Trim puts his bat on his stick, while my lord is giving him the ring, and whispers orders.* Well, gentlemen, do your business manfully, and nothing shall be too good for you.

All. Bless your honour.

[*Exeunt L. Hardy and Campley.*]

Trim. Now, my brave friends and fellow-soldiers—[*Aside.*] I must fellow-soldier them just before battle, like a true officer, though I cane them all the year round beside. [*Strutting about.*] Major-General Trim, no, pox, Trim sounds so very short and prig-gish—that my name should be a monosyllable! But the foreign news will write me, I suppose, Monsieur or Chevalier Trimont. Seigneur Trimoni, or count Trimuntz, in the German army, I shall perhaps be

called; ay, that 's all the plague and comfort of us great men, they do so toss our names about—But, gentlemen, you are now under my command—Huzza! thrice—faith, this is very pleasing, this grandeur! why, after all, it is upon the neck of such scoundrels as these gentlemen, that we great captains build our renown—A million or two of these fellows make an Alexander, and as that my predecessor said in the tragedy of him on the very same occasion, going to storm for his Statira, so do I for my dear sempstress, Madam d'Epingle.

*When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay;
'Tis beauty calls, and glory leads the way.*

[Exeunt]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter TRUSTY and Lord BRUMPTON.

Trusty.

SHE knows no moderation in her good fortune—You may hear her and Tattleaid laugh aloud—She is so wantonly merry.

L. *Brump.* But this of Lady Charlotte is the very utmost of all ill—Pray read—but I must sit—my late fit of the gout makes me act with pain and constraint—let me see—

Trusty. She writ it by the page, who brought it me, as I had wheedled him to do all their passages.

L. Brump. [*Reads.*]—‘You must watch the occasion of the servants being gone out of the house with the corpse: Tattleaid shall conduct you to my Lady Charlotte’s apartment—away with her—and be sure you bed her——’

‘Your affectionate sister, Mary Brumpton.’

Brumpton! The creature—She called as Frank’s mother was!—This is to forget her very humanity—her very sex.—Where is my poor boy? where’s Frank?—does not he want?—how has he lived all this time?—not a servant, I warrant, to attend him—what company can he keep?—what can he say of his father!

Trusty. Though you made him not your heir, he is still your son—and has all the duty and tenderness in the world for your memory——

L. Brump. It is impossible, *Trusty*, it is impossible—I will not rack myself with the thought. That one I have injured can be so very good—Keep me in countenance—tell me he hates my very name——would not assume my title, because it descends from me.—What’s his company?

Trusty. Young Tom Campley, they are never asunder.

L. Brump. I am glad he has my pretty tattler—the cheerful innocent——*Harriot*——I hope he’ll be good to her—he’s good-natured, and well-bred——

Trusty. But, my lord, she was very punctual in ordering the funeral——she bade *Sable* be sure to lay

your deep enough——she had heard such stories of the wicked sextons taking up people——but I wish, my lord, you would please to hear her and Tattleaid once more——

L. *Brump.* I know to what thy zeal tends——But I tell you, since you cannot be convinced but that I have still a softness for her——I behold her now with the same eyes that you do——she has a great wit but a little mind——something ever wanting to make her appear my Lady Brumpton——she has nothing natively great. You see I love her not——I talk with judgment of her——

Trusty. I see it, my good lord, with joy I see it——nor care how few things I see more in this world——my satisfaction is complete——welcome old age——welcome decay——'t is not decay, but growth to a later being. [Exit, leading L. Brumpton.]

Re-enter TRUSTY, meeting CABINET.

Trusty. I have your letter, Mr. Cabinet.

Cab. I hope, sir, you'll believe it was not in my nature to be guilty of so much baseness; but being born a gentleman, and bred out of all road of industry, in that idle manner too many are, I soon spent a small patrimony; and being debauched by luxury I fell into the narrow mind to dread no infamy like poverty——which made me guilty, as that paper tells you——and had I not writ to you, I am sure I never could have told you of it.

Trusty. It is an ingenuous, pious penitence in you——

my Lord Hardy—(to whom this secret is inestimable) is a noble natured man—and you shall find him such—I give you my word——

Cab. I know, sir, your integrity——

Trusty. But pray be there—all that you have to do is to ask for the gentlewoman at the house, at my Lord Hardy's—she 'll take care of you—And pray have patience, where she places you, 'till you see me.—
[Exit Cab.] My Lord Hardy's being at an house where they receive lodgers, has allowed me convenience to place every body I think necessary to be by at her discovery—This prodigious welcome secret! I see, however impracticable honest actions may appear, we may go on with just hope.

All that is ours, is to be justly bent,

And Heaven in its own cause will bless th' event.

[Exit.

Enter WIDOW in deep mourning, with a dead Squirrel on her arm, and TATTLEAID.

Wid. It must be so—It must be your carelessness—What had the page to do in my bed-chamber?

Tat. Indeed, madam, I can't tell—But I came in and catch'd him wringing round his neck——

Wid. Tell the rascal from me, he shall romp with the footmen no more—No—I 'll send the rogue in a frock to learn Latin among the dirty boys that come to good—I will—Poor harmless animal—pretty ev'n in death.——

Death might have over-look'd thy little life——
 How could'st thou, Robin, leave thy nuts and me?
 Cheerfully didst bear thy little chain,
 Content—So I but fed thee with this hand.

Tat. Alas! alas! we are all mortal: consider, madam, my lord's dead too.

Wid. Ay, but our animal friends do wholly die; an husband or relation, after death, is rewarded or tormented—that's some consolation—I know her tears are false, for she hated Robin always. [*Aside.*] But she's a well-bred dishonest servant, that never speaks a painful truth—But I'll resolve to conquer my affliction—Never speak more of Robin—Hide him there—But to my dress—How soberly magnificent is black—and the train—I wonder how widows came to wear such long tails?

Tat. Why, madam, the stateliest of all creatures has the longest tail; the peacock, nay, it has of all creatures the finest mien too—except your ladyship, who are a phoenix——

Wid. Ho! brave Tattleaid—But did not you observe what a whining my Lady Sly made, when she had drank a little? Did you believe her? Do you think there are really people sorry for their husbands?

Tat. Really, madam, some men do leave their fortunes in such distraction, that I believe it may be—

[*Speaks with pins in her mouth.*]

Wid. But I swear I wonder how it came up to dress us thus—But I protest I wonder how two of us thus clad can meet with a grave face—methinks they should

laugh out like two fortune-tellers, or two opponent lawyers that know each other for cheats.

Tat. Ha! ha! ha! I swear to you, madam, your ladyship's wit will choke me one time or other—I had like to have swallowed all the pins in my mouth——

Wid. [*A noise within.*]—Ha! what noise is that—that noise of fighting—Run, I say—Whither are you going—What, are you mad—Will you leave me alone—Can't you stir—What, you can't take your message with you—Whatever 't is, I suppose you are not in the plot; not you!—Nor that now they're breaking open my house for Charlotte—Not you—Go see what's the matter, I say—I have nobody I can trust—One [*Exit Tattleaid*] minute I think this wretch honest, and the next false—Whither shall I turn me!

Tat. Madam!—Madam! [*Re-entering.*]

Wid. Madam, madam, will you swallow me gaping—

Tat. Pray, good my lady, be not so out of humour—But there is a company of rogues have set upon our servants and the burial man's, while others ran away with the corpse——

Wid. How, what can this mean! what can they do with it! Well, 't will save the charge of interment—But to what end?

Enter TRUSTY, and a Servant bloody and dirty, hauling in CLUMP and BUMPKIN.

Serv. I'll teach you better manners—I'll poor

H

soldier you—you dog you, I will—Madam, here are two of the rascals that were in the gang of rogues that carried away the corpse.

Wid. We 'll examine them apart—Well, sirrah, what are you? whence came you? what 's your name, sirrah? [*Clump makes signs as a dumb man.*]

Serv. O, you dog, you could speak loud enough just now, sirrah, when your brother rogues mauled Mr. Sable—we 'll make you speak, sirrah.

Wid. Bring the other fellow hither—I suppose you will own you knew that man before you saw him at my door?

Clump. I think I have seen the gentleman's face.

[*Bowing to Bumpkin.*]

Wid. The gentleman's! the villain mocks me—But, friend, you look like an honest man, what are you? whence came you?—What are you, friend?

Bump. I'se at present but a private gentleman, but I was listed to be a serjeant in my lord Hardy's company—I'se not ashamed of my name, nor of my koptin—

Wid. Leave the room all. [*Exeunt all but Trusty and Tattleaid.*]*—*Mr. Trusty—Lord Hardy! O that impious young man—thus, with the sacrilegious hands of ruffians to divert his father's ashes from their urn, and rest—I suspect this fellow. [*Aside.*] Mr. Trusty I must desire you to be still near me—I 'll know the bottom of this, and go to Lord Hardy's lodgings, as I am, instantly—'Tis but the backside of this street, I think—Let a coach be called—Tattleaid, as soon as I

I am gone, conduct my brother and his friends to Lady Charlotte, away with her—bring Mademoiselle away to me, that she may not be a witness—Come, good Mr. Trusty. [Exeunt.

Enter Lord HARDY, *leading* HARRIOT, CAMPLEY, *and* TRIM.

Lady Har. Why then I find this Mr. Trim is a perfect General—But were not you saying, my lord, you believed Lady Brumpton would follow hither?—If so, pray let me be gone——

L. Hardy. No, madam; I must beseech your ladyship to stay, for there are things alledged against her which you, who have lived in the family, may, perhaps, give light into, and which I can't believe even she could be guilty of.

Lady Har. Nay, my lord, that's generous to a folly, for even for her usuage of you (without regard to myself), I am ready to believe she would do any thing that can come into the head of a close, malicious, cruel, designing woman.

Enter Boy.

Boy. My Lady Brumpton's below——

Lady Har. I'll run then——

Camp. No, no, stand your ground; you're a soldier's wife. Come, we'll rally her to death——

L. Hardy. Pr'ythee entertain her a little, while I go in for a moment's thought on this occasion. [Exit.

Lady Har. She has more wit than us both——

H ij

Camp. Pshaw, no matter for that—Be sure, as soon as the sentendè is out of my mouth, to clap in with something else—and laugh at all I say: I'll be grateful, and burst myself at my pretty witty wife—We'll fall in slap upon her—She shan't have time to say a word of the running away.

Enter Lady BRUMPTON and TRUSTY.

O, my Lady Brumpton, your ladyship's most obedient servant. This is my Lady Harriot Campley—Why, madam, your ladyship is immediately in your mourning—Nay, as you have more wit than any body, so (what seldom wits have) you have more prudence too—Other widows have nothing in readiness but a second husband—but you, I see, had your very weeds and dress lying by you——

Lady Har. Ay, madam; I see your ladyship is of the order of widowhood, for you have put on the habit——

Wid. I see your ladyship is not of the profession of virginity, for you have lost the look on't——

Camp. You're in the habit—That was so pretty; nay, without flattery, Lady Harriot, you have a great deal of wit, ha! ha! ha!

Lady Har. No, my Lady Brumpton, here is the woman of wit; but indeed she has got but little enough, considering how much her ladyship has to defend—Ha! ha! ha!

Wid. I'm sorry, madam, your ladyship has not what's sufficient for your occasions, or that this pretty

gentleman can't supply them—[Campley *dancing about and trolling.*] Hey-day, I find, sir, your heels are a great help to your head—They relieve your wit, I see; and I do n't question but ere now they have been as kind to your valour—Ha! ha! ha!

Camp. Pox, I can say nothing, 't is always thus with your endeavours to be witty. [*Aside.*] I saw, madam, your mouth go, but there could be nothing offered in answer to what my Lady Harriot said—'T was home—'T was cutting satire——

Lady Har. Oh, Mr. Campley! But pray, madam, has Mr. Cabinet visited your ladyship since this calamity—How stands that affair now?

Wid. Nay, madam, if you already want instructions—I'll acquaint you how the world stands, if you are in distress, but I fear Mr. Campley overhears us.

Camp. I swear, Lady Harriot, were I not already yours, I could have a *tendre* for this lady.

Wid. Come, good folks, I find we are very free with each other—What makes you two here? Do you board my lord, or he you? Come, come, ten shillings a head will go a great way in a family——What do you say, Mrs. Campley, is it so? Does your ladyship go to market yourself?—Nay, you are in the right of it—Come, can you imagine what makes my lord stay? He is not now with his land steward—not signing leases, I hope—Ha! ha! ha!

Camp. Hang her, to have more tongue than a man and his wife too.

[*Aside.*]

Enter Lord HARDY.

L. Hardy. Because your ladyship is, I know, in very much pain in company that you have injur'd, I'll be short—Open those doors; there lies your husband's, my father's body, and by you stands the man accuses you of poisoning him!

Wid. Of poisoning him!

Trusty. The symptoms will appear upon the corpse.

L. Hardy. But I am seized by nature. How shall I view a breathless lump of clay—him, whose high veins conveyed to me this vital force and motion.

I cannot bear this sight——

I am as fix'd and motionless as he——

[They open the coffin, out of which jumps

Lady Charlotte.

Art thou the ghastly shape my mind had form'd!

Art thou the cold inanimate—Bright maid!

Thou giv'st new higher life to all around.

Whither does fancy, fir'd with love, convey me!

Why is my fair unmov'd—My heav'nly fair;

Does she but smile at my exalted rapture?

Lady Char. Speak on, speak on, and charm my attentive ear:

How sweet applause is from an honest tongue!

Nor now with fond reluctance doubt to enter

My spacious, bright abode, this gallant heart.

[Reclines on Hardy.

Lady Har. Ay, marry, these are high doings in-

deed; the greatness of the occasion has burst their passion into speech—Why, Mr. Campley, when we are near these fine folks, you and I are but mere sweet-hearts—I protest, I'll never be won so; you shall begin again with me.

Camp. Pr'ythee, why dost name us poor animals! They have forgot there are any such creatures as their old acquaintance Tom and Harriot.

L. Hardy. So we did indeed, but you'll pardon us.

Camp. My lord, I never thought to see the minute wherein I should rejoice at your forgetting me, but now I do heartily.

[*Embracing.*]

Wid. Sir, you're at the bottom of all this—I see your skill at close conveyances—I'll know the meaning instantly of these intricacies; 'tis not your seeming honesty and gravity shall save you from your deserts——My husband's death was sudden—you and the burial fellow were observ'd very familiar——Produce my husband's body, or I'll try you for his murder; which I find you'd put on me, thou hellish engine!

Trusty. Look you, madam, I could answer you, but I scorn to reproach people in misery—you're undone, madam——

Wid. What does the dotard mean? Produce the body, villain, or the law shall have thine for it——[*Trusty exit, hastily.*] Do you design to let the villain escape? How justly did your father judge, that made you a beggar with that spirit—You mentioned just now you could not bear the company of those you'd injur'd,

L. Hardy. You are a woman, madam, and my father's widow—but sure you think you've highly injured me.

[*Here my Lord and Trusty half enter and observe.*]

Wid. No, sir, I have not, will not injure you—I must obey the will of my deceased lord to a tittle—I must justly pay legacies. Your father, in consideration that you were his blood, would not wholly alienate you—he left you, sir, this shilling, with which estate you are now Earl of Brumpton.

L. Hardy. Insolent woman—It was not me my good father disinherited, 't was him you represented. The guilt was thine, he did an act of justice.

Lord BRUMPTON *entering with* TRUSTY.

L. Brump. Oh, unparalleled goodness!

Trusty. Oh, Tattleaid—his and our hour is come!

Wid. What do I see, my lord, my master, husband, living!

L. Brump. [*Turning from her, running to his son.*] Oh! my boy, my son—Mr. Campley—Charlotte—Harriot—[*All kneeling to him.*] Oh, my children, I shall expire in the too mighty pleasure! my boy!

L. Hardy. A son, an heir! a bridegroom in one hour! Oh, grant me Heaven, grant me moderation!

Wid. A son, an heir! Am I neglected then?
What! can my lord revive, yet dead to me?
Only to me deceased—to me alone,
Deaf to my sighs, and senseless to my moan?

L. *Brump.* 'T is long since I have seen plays, good madam, that I know not whence thou dost repeat, nor can I answer.

Wid. You can remember through a certain settlement, in which I am thy son and heir—great Noble, that I suppose not taken from a play, that 's as irrevocable as law can make it.

Trusty. Value her not, my lord ; a prior obligation made you incapable of settling on her, your wife.

L. *Brump.* Thy kindness, Trusty, does distract thee—I would indeed disengage myself by any honest means, but, alas, I know no prior gift that avoids this to her.

Trusty. Look you, madam, I'll come again immediately—Be not troubled, my dear lords—— [*Exit.*

Camp. Trusty looks very confident, there is some good in that.

Re-enter TRUSTY with CABINET.

Cab. What! my lord Brumpton living?——nay then——

Trusty. Hold, sir, you must not stir, nor can you, sir, retract this for your hand-writing—My lord, this gentleman, since your supposed death, has lurked about the house to speak with my lady, or Tattleaid, who, upon your disease, have shunned him, in hopes, I suppose, to buy him off for ever—Now, as he was prying about, he peep'd into your closet——wh he saw your lordship reading—struck with ho and believing himself (as well he might) the dist

of your ghost for alienation of your fortune from your family—he writ me this letter, wherein he acknowledges a private marriage with this lady, half a year before you ever saw her.

All. How!

[*All turn upon her disdainfully.*

Wid. No more a widow then, but still a wife.

[*Recovering from her confusion,*

I am thy wife——thou author of my evil.

Thou must partake with me an homely board,

An homely board that never shall be chearful;

But ev'ry meal embitter'd with upbraidings,

Thou that could'st tell me, good and ill were words,

Thou that could'st basely let me to another,

Yet could'st see sprights, great unbeliever!

Coward! bugg-bear'd penitent——

Stranger henceforth to all my joys, my joys.

To thy dishonour: despicable thing,

Dishonour thee! Thou voluntary cuckold!

Thou disgrace to thy own sex, and the whole human race!

May scorn and beggary pursue thy name,

And dark despair close up a life of shame.

[*Cabinet sneaks off. Widow flings after him, Tattleaid following.*

L. Brump. I see you 're all confused as well as I——

Ye are my children—I hold you all so. And for your own use will speak plainly to you, I cannot hate that woman: nor shall she ever want. Though I scorn to bear her injuries——yet had I ne'er been roused from that low passion to a worthless creature—but by

disdain of her attempt on my friend's child. I am glad that scorn's confirmed by her being that fellow's—whom for my own sake I only will contemn. Thee, Trusty, how shall we prosecute with equal praise and thanks for this great revolution in our house.

Trusty. Never to speak on 't more, my lord.

L. Brumf. Now, gentlemen, let the miseries which I have but miraculously escaped, admonish you to have always inclinations proper for the stage of life you are in.

*You who the path of honour make your guide,
Must let your passion with your blood subside;
And no untim'd ambition, love, or rage,
Employ the moments of declining age;
Else boys will in your presence lose their fear,
And laugh at the grey head they should revere.*

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

*LOVE, hope, and fear, desire, aversion, rage,
All that can move the soul, or can assuage,
Are drawn in miniature of life, the stage.
Here you can view yourselves, and here is shown,
To what you're born in sufferings not your own.
The stage to wisdom's no fantastic way,
Athens herself learn'd virtue at a play.
Our author me to-night a soldier drew;
But faintly writ, what warmly you pursue:*

*To his great purpose, had he equal fire,
He'd not aim to please only, but inspire ;
He'd sing what hovering fate attends our isle,
And from base pleasure rouse to glorious toil.
Full time the earth t' a new decision brings,
While William gives the Roman eagle wings :
With arts and arms shall Britain tamely end,
Which naked Piets so bravely could defend ;
The painted heroes on th' invaders press,
And think their wounds addition to their dress :
In younger years we 've been with conquest blest,
And Paris has the British yoke confess'd ;
Is 't then in England, in bless'd England known,
Her kings are nam'd from a revolted throne ?
But we offend———You no examples need ;
In imitation of yourselves proceed ;
'Tis you your country's honour must secure ;
Be all your actions worthy of Namur :
With gentle fires your gallantry improve ;
Courage is brutal, if untouch'd with love.
If soon our utmost bravery's not display'd,
Think that bright circle must be captives made ;
Let thoughts of saving them our toils beguile,
And they reward our labours with a smile.*

THE END.

THE
ROYAL CONVERT.

A
TRAGEDY,
BY **NICHOLAS ROWE, Esq.**

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK.

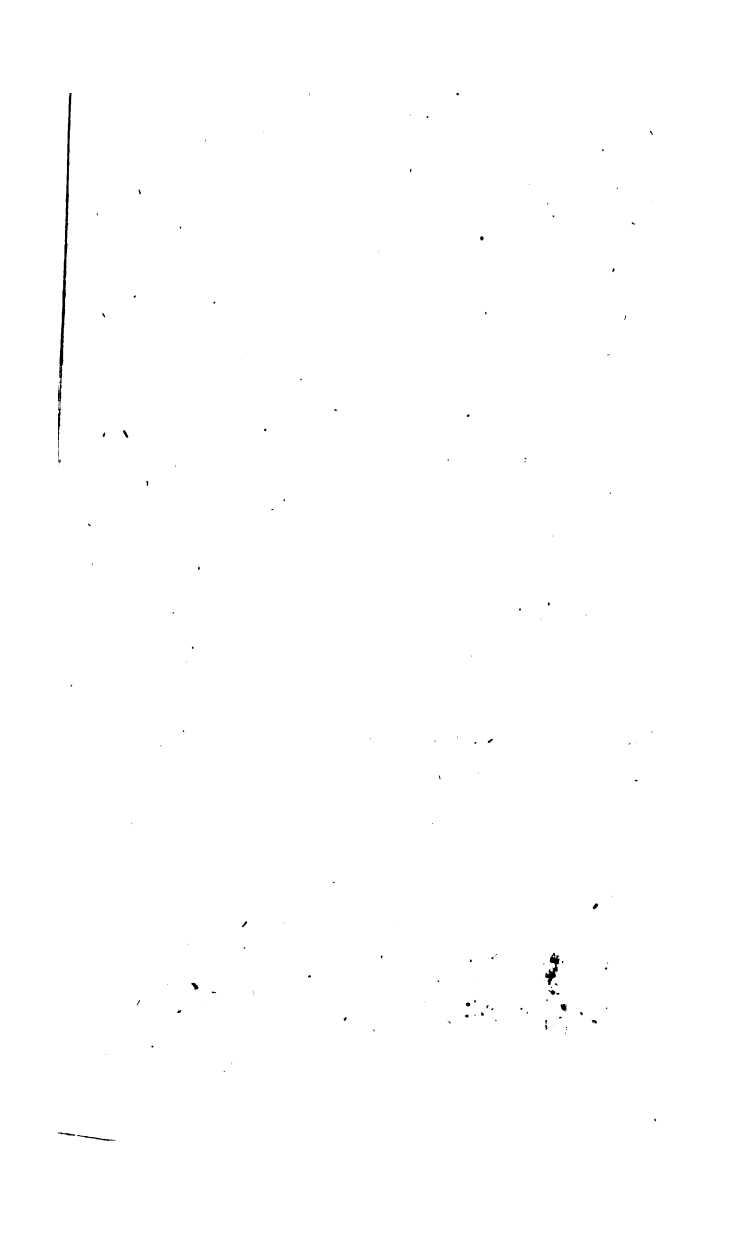
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JOHN BELL, British Library, STRAND,
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MDCCXCV.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

CHARLES, LORD HALIFAX.

MY LORD,

IF I could have the vanity to make a merit of dedicating this Tragedy, I should here take an opportunity of telling you, that I am, in this, endeavouring to make the best, and only return I am capable of, for all those marks of exceeding goodness and humanity, which I have still had the honour to meet with from your Lordship. But since the matter is quite otherwise, since it is highly to my advantage to shelter myself under so great a name; since I have done myself so much honour by it; I am bound to own, with all the gratitude I am capable of, that your Lordship's patronage is a new, and will be a lasting obligation upon me.

Most kinds of Poetry, but especially Tragedies, come into the world now, like Children born under ill stars: a general indifference, or rather disinclination, attends like a bad influence upon them; and after having bustled through ill usage, and a short life, they sleep, and are forgotten. The relish of things of this kind is certainly very much altered from what it was some time since; and though I will

not presume to censure other people's pleasures, and prescribe to the various tastes of mankind; yet I will take the liberty to say, that those who scorn to be entertained like their fore-fathers, will hardly substitute so reasonable a diversion in the room of that which they have laid aside. I could wish there were not so much reason as there is to attribute this change of inclinations, to a disesteem of learning itself. Too many people are apt to think, that books are not necessary to the finishing the character of a fine Gentleman; and are therefore easily drawn to despise what they know nothing of. But, my Lord, among all these mortifying thoughts, it is still a pleasure to the Muses, to think there are some men of too delicate understandings to give into the tastes of a depraved age; men that have not only the power but the will to protect those arts which they love, because they are masters of them.

It would be very easy for me to distinguish one among those few, after the most advantageous manner; but all men of common sense have concurred in doing it already, and there is no need of a panegyric.

I could be almost tempted to expostulate with the rest of the world (for I am sure there is no occasion to make an apology to your Lordship) in defence of poetry. I am far from thinking of a good poet as

the Stoicks did of their wise men, that he was sufficient for every thing, could be every thing, and excell in every thing, as he pleased; yet sure I may be allowed to say, that that brightness, quickness, that strength and greatness of thinking, which is required in any of the nobler kinds of poetry, would raise a man to an uncommon distinction in any profession or business, that has a relation to good sense and understanding. One modern instance can at least be given, where the same genius that shone in poetry, was found equal to the first employments of the state—and where the same man, who by his virtue and wisdom was highly useful to, and instrumental in the safety and happiness of his native country, had been equally ornamental to it in his wit.

This is what I could not help saying, for the honour of an art which has been formerly the favourite of the greatest men. Not that it wants a recommendation to your Lordship, who have always been a constant and generous protector of it. This indeed would be much more properly said to the world, and when I have told them what men have equally adorned it, and been adorned by it, I might not unfitly apply to them, what Horace said to the Piso's—

----- Ne fortè Pudori

Sit tibi Musa Lyrae solers & Cantor Apollo.

For my own inconsiderable pretensions to verse, I

A üj

*shall, I confess, think better even of them, than I
have ever yet done, if they shall afford me the
honour to be always thought,*

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient, and

Devoted humble servant,

N. ROWE.

PROLOGUE.

*SINCE to your fam'd fore-fathers quite contrary,
You from their pleasures, as their wisdom vary;
What art, what method, shall the poet find,
To hit the taste of each fantastic mind;
Legions of joys your wand'ring fancies lead,
Like summer flies, which in the shambles breed;
Each year they swarm anew, and to the last succeed.
Time was, when fools by fellowship were known;
But now they stray; and in this populous town
Each coxcomb has a folly of his own.
Some dress, some dance, some play; not to forget
Your piquet parties, and your dear basset.
Some praise, some rail, some bow, and some make faces;
Your country squires hunt foxes, your court, places.
The city too fills up the various scene,
Where fools lay wagers, and where wise men win.
One rails at Cælia for a late mischance;
One grumbles, and cries up the power of France;
This man talks politics, and that takes pills,
One cures his own, and one the nation's ills.
Now fiddling, and the charms of sing-song win ye;
Harmonious Peg, and Warbling Valentini.
As to your drinking—but, for that we spare it,
Nor with your other vile delights compare it,
There's something more than sound, there's sense in claret.*

Mean-while neglected verse, in long disgrace,
Amongst your many pleasures finds no place ;
The virtuous laws of common sense forswearing,
You damn us, like pack'd juries, without hearing.
Each puny whipster here, is wit enough,
With scornful airs, and supercilious snuff,
To cry, this tragedy's such damn'd grave stuff.
But now we hope more equal judges come,
Since Flanders sends the generous warriors home :
You that have fought for liberty and laws,
Whose valour the proud Gallic tyrant awes,
Join to assert the sinking muses' cause ;
Since the same flame, by different ways express'd,
Glow's in the hero's and the poet's breast :
The same great thoughts, that rouse you to the fight,
Inspire the muse, and bid the poet write.



Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

HENGIST, King of Kent, son to Hengist, the first Saxon invader of Britain, - - -	Mr. Wroughton.
ARIBERT, his brother, - -	Mr. Lewis.
OFFA, a Saxon Prince, - -	Mr. Whitfield.
SEOFRID, first minister, and favou- rite to the king, - -	Mr. Hull.
OSWALD, friend to Aribert,	Mr. Robson.

Women.

RODOGUNE, a Saxon Princess, sister to Offa, betrothed to the king,	Mrs. Ward.
ETHELINDA, a British lady, privately married to Aribert.	Mrs. Hartley.

Priests, Officers, Soldiers, and other Attendants.

Scene in Kent, about twenty years after the first invasion of
Britain by the Saxons.



THE
ROYAL CONVERT.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter ARIBERT and OSWALD.

Aribert.

SUCH are, my friend, the joys our loves have known,
So still to be desired, so ever new,
Nor by fruition pall'd, nor chang'd by absence.
Whate'er the poets dreamt of their Elysium,
Or what the saints believe of the first paradise,
"When nature was not yet deform'd by winter,
"But one perpetual beauty crown'd the year,"
Such have we found 'em still, still, "still" the same.

Osw. Such grant, kind heaven, their course to be
for ever!

But yet, my Prince, forgive your faithful Oswald,
If he believes you melt with too much tenderness;
Your noble heart forgets its native greatness,
And sinks in softness when you languish thus,
Thus sigh and murmur but for six days absence.

Arib. Chide not; but think, if e'er, "when thou wert young,"

Thou lov'dst thyself, how thou wert wont to judge
Of time, of love, of absence and impatience.

What! six long days, and never write nor send!
Tho' Adelmar and Kenwald, faithful both,
Were left behind, to bring me tidings from her:
How, Ethelinda! how hast thou forgot me!

Osw. Perhaps I err; but if the pain be such,
Why is the fair one, who alone can ease it,
Thus far divided from your longing arms?
'T were better ne'er to part, than thus to mourn.

Arib. Oh, Oswald! is there not a fatal cause?
Thou know'st my Ethelinda——

Osw. Is a Christian;
A name by Saxons, and their gods, abhorr'd.
To me her differing faith imports not much;
'T is true, indeed, bred to my country's manners,
I worship as my fathers did before me.
Unpractis'd in disputes, and wrangling schools,
I seek no farther knowledge, and so keep
My mind at peace, nor know the pain of doubting:
What others think I judge not of too nicely;
But hold all honest men are in the right.

Arib. Then know yet more; for my whole breast
is thine,

Ev'n all my secret soul: I am a Christian.
'T is wonderful to tell; for Oh, my Oswald!
I listen'd to the charmer of my heart.
Still, as the night that fled away, I sate,

I heard her, with an eloquence divine,
 Reason of holy and mysterious truths ;
 Of heaven's most righteous doom, of man's injustice ;
 Of laws to curb the will, and bind the passions ;
 Of life, of death, and immortality ;
 " Of gnashing fiends beneath, and pains eternal ;
 " Of starry thrones, and endless joys above."
 My very soul was aw'd, was shook within me ;
 Methought I heard distinct, I saw most plain,
 Some angel, in my Ethelinda's form,
 Point out my way to everlasting happiness.

Osw. 'Tis wonderful, indeed ! and yet great souls,
 By nature half divine, soar to the stars,
 And hold a near acquaintance with the gods.
 And, Oh, my prince ! when I survey thy virtue,
 I own the seal of heaven imprinted on thee ;
 I stand convinc'd that good and holy powers
 Inspire and take delight to dwell within thee.
 Yet crouds will still believe, and priests will teach,
 As wand'ring fancy, and as int'rest lead.
 How will the king, and our fierce Saxon chiefs
 Approve this bride and faith ? Had royal Hengist,
 Thy father, liv'd——

Arib. 'Tis on that rock we perish ;
 Thou bring'st his dreadful image to my thoughts,
 And now he stands before me, stormy, fierce,
 Imperious, unrelenting, and to death
 Tenacious of his purpose, once resolv'd.
 Just such he seems, as when severe and frowning
 He forc'd the king, my brother, and myself,

To kneel and swear at Woden's cruel altar,
First, never to forego our country's gods ;
Then made us vow, with deepest imprecations,
If it were either's fortune e'er to wed,
Never to chuse a wife among the christians,

Osw. Have you not fail'd in both ?

Arib. 'Tis true, I have ;
But for a cause so just, so worthy of me,
That not t' have failed in both, had been t' have fail'd.
Yes, Oswald, by the conscious judge within,
So do I stand acquitted to myself,
That were my Ethelinda free from danger,
On peril of my life I would make known,
And to the world avow my love and faith.

Osw. I dare not, nay, 'tis sure I cannot blame you :
" You are the secret worship of my soul,
" To me so perfect, that you cannot err."
But, Oh, my prince, let me conjure you now,
By that most faithful service I've still paid you,
By love, and by the gentle Ethelinda,
Be cautious of your danger, rest in silence.
In holy matters, zeal may be your guide,
And lift you on her flaming wings to heaven ;
But here on earth trust reason and be safe.

Arib. 'Tis true, the present angry face of things,
speaks our coolest thoughts : the British king,
mbrosius, arms, and calls us forth to battle,
manding back the fruitful fields of Kent,
by Vortigern to royal Hengist given ;

A mean reward for all those Saxon lives
Were lost, in propping Britain's sinking state.

Osw. The war with Britain is a distant danger,
Nor to be weigh'd with our domestic fears.
Young Offa, chief among our Saxon princes,
Who at the king's entreaty friendly came
From Northern Jutland, and the banks of Elbe,
With twice ten thousand warriors to his aid,
Frowns on our court, complains aloud of wrongs,
And wears a public face of discontent.

Arib. 'Tis said he is offended, that the king
Delays to wed his sister.

Osw. 'T was agreed,
'T was made the first condition of their friendship,
And sworn with all the pomp of priests and altars,
That beauteous Rodogune should be our queen :
Then wherefore this delay ? The time was fix'd,
The feast was bid, and mirth proclaim'd to all ;
The crowd grew jovial with the hopes of holidays,
And each, according to our country's manner,
Provok'd his fellow with a friendly bowl,
And bless'd the royal pair : when on the morn,
The very morn that should have join'd their hands,
The king forbade the rites.

Arib. Two days are past,
Nor has my brother yet disclos'd the cause.
Last night, at parting from him, he stopt short,
Then catch'd my hand, and with a troubled accent,
With words that spoke like secret shame and sorrow

He told me he had something to impart,
And wish'd that I would wait him in the morning.

Osw. But see, prince Offa and his beauteous sister!
The king's most favour'd counsellor, old Seofrid,
Is with 'em too.

Arib. Retire; I would not meet 'em.
That princess, Oswald, is esteem'd a wonder.
To me she seems most fair; and yet, methinks—
Dost thou not mark? There is, I know not what,
Of sullen and severe, of fierce and haughty,
That pleases not, but awes; I gaze astonish'd,
And fear prevents desire.—“ So men tremble,
“ When light'ning shoots in glittering trails along;
“ It shines, 't is true, and gilds the gloomy night;
“ But where it strikes, 't is fatal.”

[*Exeunt Arib. and Osw.*]

Enter OFFA, RODOGUNE, SEOFRID, and Attendants.

Offa. By Woden, no! I will not think he meant it;
Revenge had else been swift.—So high I hold
The honour of a soldier and a king,
I wo' not think your master meant to wrong me.
Let him beware, however—jealous friendship,
And beauty's tender fame, can brook no slights.
What in a foe I pardon or despise,
Is deadly from a friend, and so to be repaid.

Seof. Whatever fame or ancient story tells,
Of brother's love, or celebrated friends,
Whose faith in perils oft, and oft in death,
Severely had been try'd, and never broke,

Such is the truth, and such the grateful mind
Of royal Hengist to the princely Offa.

Nor you, fair princess, [*To Rodogune*] frown, if wars
and troubles,

If watchful councils, and if cares which wait
On kings, the nursing-fathers of their people,
With-hold awhile the monarch from your arms.

Rod. When fierce Ambrosius leads the Britons forth,
Thunders in arms, and shakes the dusty field,
It suits thy wary master's caution well,
To sit with dreaming hoary heads at council,
And waste the midnight taper in debates,
But let him still be wise, consult his safety,
And trouble me no more. Does he send thee
With tales of dull respect, and faint excuses?
Tell him, he might have spar'd the formal message,
Till some kind friend had told him how I languish'd,
How like a turtle I bemoan'd his absence.

Seof. Pardon, fair excellence, if falt'ring age
Profanes the passion I was bid to paint,
And drops the tale imperfect from my tongue.
But lovers best can plead their cause themselves;
And see, your slave, the king, my master, comes,
To move your gentle heart with faithful vows,
And pay his humble homage at your feet.

Enter the King, Guards, and other Attendants.

King. But that I trust not to that babbler, Fame,
Who, careless of the majesty of kings,
Scatters lewd lies among the crowd; and wins

The easy idiots to believe in monsters,
I should have much to charge you with, my brother :
I stand accus'd——

Offa. How, sir!

King. So speaks report,
As wanting to my honour and my friend ;
By you I stand accus'd.

Offa. Now, by our friendship,
If that be yet an oath, resolve me, Hengist,
Whence are these doubts between us, whence this
coldness ?

Say, thou, who know'st, what sudden secret thought
Has stepp'd between, and dash'd the public joy ?
Thou call'st me brother ; wherefore wait the priests,
And suffer Hymen's holy fires to languish ?
What hinders but that now the rites begin,
That now we lose all thoughts of past displeasure,
And in the temple tie the sacred knot
Of love and friendship to endure for ever ?

King. What hinders it, indeed, but that which
makes

This medley war within ; but that which causes
This sickness of the soul, and weighs her down
With more than mortal cares ?

Offa. What shall I call
This secret gloomy grief, that hides its head
And loves to lurk in shades ? Have royal minds
Such thoughts as shun the day ?

King. Urge me no farther,
But, like a friend, be willing not to know

What to reveal would give thy friend a pain.
Be still the partner of my heart, and share
In arms and glory with me! but, Oh! leave,
Leave me alone to struggle thro' one thought,
One secret anxious pang that jars within me,
That makes me act a madman's part before thee,
And talk confusion——If thou art my friend,
Thou hast heard me, and be satisfy'd——if not,
I have too much descended from myself
To make the mean request——but rest we here.
To you, fair princess——

Rod. No!—there needs no more;
For I would spare thee the unready tale.
Know, faithless king, I give thee back thy vows,
And bid thee sin secure, be safely perjur'd,
Since, if our gods behold thee with my eyes,
Their thunder shall be kept for nobler vengeance,
And what they scorn, like me, they shall forgive.

King. When anger lightens in the fair-one's eyes,
Lowly we bow, as to offended Heaven,
With blind obedience, and submissive worship;
“Nor with too curious boldness rashly reason
“Of what is just or unjust, such high power
“Is to itself a rule, and cannot err.
“Yet this may be permitted me to speak,”
Howe'er the present circumstance reproach me,
Yet still my heart avows your beauty's power,
My eyes confess you fair.——

Rod. Whate'er I am
Is of myself, by native worth existing,

Secure and independant of thy praise ;
Nor let it seem too proud a boast, if minds
By nature great, are conscious of their greatness,
And hold it mean to borrow ought from flattery.

King. You are offended, lady.

Rod. Hengist, no.

Perhaps thou think'st this generous indignation,
That blushing burns upon my glowing cheek,
And sparkles in my eyes, a woman's weakness,
"The malice of a poor forsaken maid,
"Who rails at faithless man."—Mistaken monarch!—
For know, e'en from the first, my soul disdain'd thee ;
Nor am I left by thee, but thou by me,
"So was thy falshood to my will subservient,
"And by my purpose bound. Thus man, though
limited
"By fate, may vainly think his actions free,
"While all he does, was at his hour of birth,
"Or by his gods, or potent stars ordain'd."

Offa. No more, my sister : let the gown-men talk,
And mark out right and wrong in noisy courts ;
While the brave find a nearer way to justice,
They hold themselves the balance and the sword,
And suffer wrong from none. 'Tis much beneath me,
To ask again the debt you owe to honour ;
So that be satisfy'd, we still are friends,
And brothers of the war. But mark me, Hengist,
I am not us'd to wait : and if this day
Pass unregarded as the former two,
Soon as to morrow dawns expect me——

King. Where? .

Offa. Arm'd in the field——

Scof. [*To the King.*] Beseech you, sir, be calm,
The valiant prince——

Offa. Tho' I could wish it otherwise.
And since the honour of the Saxon name,
And empire here in Britain, rests upon thee,
Believe me, I would still be found thy friend.

[*Exeunt Offa, Rodogune, and Attendants.*]

King. No, I renounce that friendship! Perish too,
Perish that name and friendship both for ever!
What are the kingdoms of the peopled earth,
What are their purple, and their crowns to me,
If I am curs'd within, and want that peace
Which every slave enjoys?

Scof. My royal master,
It racks my aged heart to see you thus;
But, Oh! what aid, what counsel can I bring you,
When all yon eastern down, e'en to the surge
That bellowing beats on Dover's chalky cliff,
With crested helmets thick embattl'd shines?
With these your friends, what are you but the greatest?
With these your foes—Oh, let me lose that thought,
And rather think I see you Britain's king;
Ambrosius vanquish'd, and the farthest Picts
Submitted to your sway, tho' the same scene
Discover'd to my view the haughty Rodogune
Plac'd on your throne, and partner of your bed.

King. What! should I barter beauty for ambition,
“Forsake my heaven of love, to reign in hell;”

Take a domestic fury to my breast,
And never know one minute's peace again?
Statesman, thou reason'st ill. By mighty Thor,
Who weilds the thunder, I will rather chuse
To meet their fury. Let 'em come together,
Young Offa and Ambrosius. Tho' my date
Of mortal life be short, it shall be glorious;
Each minute shall be rich in some great action,
To speak the king, the hero, and the lover.

Seof. "The hero and the king are glorious names;
"But, Oh, my master, wherefore is the lover?
In honour's name remember what you are,
Break from the bondage of this feeble passion,
And urge your way to glory: leave with scorn
Unmanly pleasures to unmanly minds,
And thro' the rough, the thorny paths of danger,
Aspire to virtue and immortal greatness.

King. Hence with thy hungry, dull, untimely mo-
rals,

The fond deluding sophistry of schools.

Who would be great, but to be happy too?

"And yet such idiots are we, to exchange

"Our peace and pleasure for the trifle, glory;"

What is the monarch, mighty, rich, and great?

What, but the common victim of the state:

Born to grow old in cares, to waste his blood,

And still be wretched for the public good?

"So, by the priests, the noblest of the kind

"Is to atone the angry gods design'd;

“ And while the meaner sort from death are freed,
 “ The mighty bull that wont the herd to lead,
 “ Is doom’d, for fatal excellence, to bleed.

[*Exeunt,*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter the King and SEOFRID,

King.

No more of these unnecessary doubts :
 Thy cold, thy cautious age is vainly anxious,
 Thy fears are inauspicious to my courage,
 And chill the native ardour of my soul.
 This sullen, cloudy sky, that bodes a storm,
 Shall clear, and every danger fleet away :
 Our Saxons shall forget the present discord,
 And urge the Britons with united arms ;
 Hymen shall be aton’d, shall join two hearts,
 Agreeing, kind, and fitted for each other,
 And Aribert shall be the pledge of peace.

Seof. Propitious god of love, incline his heart
 To melt before her eyes, to meet her wishes,
 And yield submission to the haughty maid.
 “ Thou that delight’st in cruel wantonness,
 “ To join unequal necks beneath thy yoke,
 “ For once be gentle, and inspire both hearts
 “ With mutual flames, that each may burn alike,
 “ Oft hast thou ruin’d kingdoms, save one now ;

"And those who curs'd thee,
"Parsimonious age,
"And rigid wisdom, shall raise altars to thee."

Enter ARIBERT.

King. But see, he comes, "and brings our wishes
with him,"

Oh, Aribert! my soul hath long desir'd thee,
Has waited long for thy relief, and wanted
To share the burden which she bears with thee,
And give thee half her sorrows.

Arib. Give me all,
Ev'n all the pain you feel, and let my truth
Be greatly try'd; let there be much to suffer,
To prove how much my willing heart can bear,
To ease my king, my brother, and my friend.

King. I know thee ever gentle in thy nature,
"Yielding and kind, and tender in thy friendship,"
And therefore all my hope of peace dwells with thee.
For, Oh, my heart has labour'd long with pain,
"I have endur'd the rage of secret grief,
"A malady that burns and rankles inward,"
And wanted such a hand as thine to heal me.

Arib. Speak it, nor wound the softness of my soul
With these obscure complainings; speak, my lord.

King. First then, this fatal marriage is my curse,
This galling yoke, to which my neck is doom'd,
This bride—she is my plague—she haunts my dreams,
Invades the softer silent hour of rest,
And breaks the balmy slumber. Night grows tedious,

She seems to lag, and hang her sable wings;
And yet I dread the dawning of the morn,
As if some screaming sprite had shriek'd, and call'd,
Hengist, arise, to-morrow is thy last.

Arib. A thousand speaking griefs are in your eyes,
To tell the rack within—I read it plain.
But, Oh, my king! what prophet could have dreamt
A turn like this, that beauty should destroy,
And love, which should have bless'd you, curse you
most?

King. Oh, wherefore nam'st thou love? Can there
be love,

When choice, the free, the cheerful voice of nature,
And reason's dearest privilege, is wanting?
What cruel laws impose a bride, or bridegroom,
On any brute but man? observe the beasts,
And mark the feather'd kind; does not the turtle,
When Venus and the coming spring incite him,
Chuse out his mate himself, and love her most,
Because he likes her best? But kings must wed,
(Curse on the hard condition of their royalty!)
That sordid slaves may toil and eat in peace.

Arib. 'T is hard, indeed!—Would she had never
come,

This——

King. So would I—but now——

Arib. Ay, now, what remedy?

When to refuse the Saxon Offa's sister
Shall shake your throne, and make the name of Hen-
gist,

The famous, the victorious name of Hengist,
Grow vile and mean in Britain.

King. Yes, my brother,
There is a remedy, and only one.
This proud, imperious fair, whose haughty soul
Disdains the humble monarchs of the earth,
“Who soars elate, affects to tread the stars,
“And scorns to mingle but with those above,”
Ev’n she, with all that majesty and beauty,
“The proudest and the fairest of her sex,”
She has the passions of a very woman,
And doats on thee, my Aribert.

Arib. On me?——

What means my lord? Impossible!

King. ’T is true;
As true as that my happiness depends
Upon her love to thee. My faithful Seofrid
Has pierc’d into her very inmost heart,
And found thee reigning there.

Arib. Then all is plain:
My swelling heart heaves at the wrong you do me,
And wo’ not be repress. Some fiend from hell
Has shed his poison in your royal breast,
And stung you with the gnawing canker, jealousy.
But wherefore should I ask for fiends from hell,
“And trace the malice of the thought from far,”
Since the perfidious author stands confess’d?
This villain has traduc’d me.——

“By the soul

“Of your victorious father, royal Hengist,

“ My ever gracious, ever honour’d master,
 “ Much have you wrong’d your faithful Seofrid,
 “ To think that I would kindle wrath betwixt you,
 “ Or strive to break your holy bond of brotherhood.

“ *King.* No, Aribert, accuse him not, nor doubt
 “ His oft, his well-try’d faith. But cast thy eyes
 “ Back on thyself, and while I hold the mirror,
 “ Survey thyself, the certain cause of love :
 “ Survey thy youthful form, by nature fashion’d
 “ The most unerring pattern of her skill ;
 “ The pomp of loveliness she spreads all o’er thee,
 “ And decks thee lavishly with ev’ry grace
 “ That charms in woman or commands in man ;
 “ Behold—nor wonder then if crowns are scorn’d,
 “ And purple majesty looks vile before thee.

“ *Arib.* Oh ! whither, whither would you lead ?
 and why

“ This prodigality of ill-tim’d praise ?

“ *Seof.* Were you not all my royal master said,
 “ Form’d to enthral the hearts of the soft sex,
 “ Yet that she loves is plain, from——

“ *Arib.* Hence, thou sycophant !”

Seof. Your pardon, sir ; it has not been my office
 To forge a tale, or cheat your ear with flattery,
 Nor have I other meaning than your service ;
 But that the princess loves you is most true.
 Emma, the chief, most favour’d of her women,
 The only partner of her secret soul,
 To me avow’d her passion ; and howe’er
 Her ugly looks resent the king’s delay

Yet in her heart with pleasure she applauds it,
And would forego, tho' hard to womankind,
The pride, high place, and dignity of empire,
To share an humbler fate with princely Aribert.

King. Why dost thou turn away?—Wherefore
deform

The grace and sweetness of thy smiling youth,
With that ungentle frown? Art thou not pleased
To see the tyrant beauty kneel before thee,
“Divested of her pride, and yield to thee.”
Unask'd, a prize, for which, like Grecian Helen,
The great ones of the earth might strive in arms,
And empires well be lost?

Arib. Are we not brothers?
We are; and nature form'd us here alike;
Save that her partial hand gave all the majesty
And greatness to my king, and left me rich
Only in plainness, friendship, truth, and tenderness.
Then wonder not our passions are the same;
That the same objects cause our love and hate.
You say you cannot love this beauteous stranger;
Is not my heart like yours?

King. Come near, my brother;
And while I lean thus fondly on thy bosom,
I will disclose my inmost soul to thee,
And shew thee ev'ry secret sorrow there.
I love, my Aribert; I dote to death:
The raging flame has touch'd my heart, my brain,
And madness will ensue.

Arib. 'T is most unhappy!

But say, what royal maid, or Saxon born,
Or in the British court, what fatal beauty
Can rival Rodogune's imperial charms?

King. 'T is all a tale of wonder, 't is a riddle.
High on the throne, and royal as I am,
I want a slave's consent to make me happy.
Nay, more, possess'd of her I love, or love,
Or some divinity more strong than Love,
Forbids my bliss, nor have I yet enjoy'd her.
Tho' I have taught my haughty heart to bow,
Tho' lowly as she is, of birth obscure,
And of a race unknown, I oft have offer'd
To raise her to my throne, make her my queen ;
Yet still her colder heart denies my suit,
And weeping, still she answers, 't is in vain.

Arib. Mysterious all, and dark! yet such is love,
And such the laws of his fantastic empire.
The wanton boy delights to bend the mighty,
And scoffs at the vain wisdom of the wise.

King. Here, in my palace, in this next apartment,
Unknown to all but this my faithful Seofrid,
The charmer of my eyes, my heart's dear hope
Remains, at once my captive and my queen.

Arib. Ha! in your palace! here! —

King. Ev'n here, my brother.
But thou, thou shalt behold her, for to thee,
As to my other self, I trust. The cares
Of courts, and tyrant business, draw me hence ;
But Seofrid shall stay, and to thy eyes

[*The King signs to Seofrid, who goes out.*

Disclose the secret treasure! Oh, my Aribetr,
Thou wo't not wonder what distracts my peace,
When thou behold'st those eyes. Pity thy brother,
And from the beach lend him thy friendly hand,
Lest, while conflicting with a sea of sorrows,
The proud waves over-bear him, and he perish.

Arib. Judge me, just heaven, and you, my royal
brother,

If my own life be dear to me as yours.
All that my scanty power can give is yours.
If I am circumscrib'd by fate, Oh, pity me,
That I can do no more; for, Oh, my king!
I would be worthy of a brother's name,
Would keep up all my int'rest in your heart,
That when I kneel before you (as it soon
May happen that I shall), when I fall prostrate,
And doubtfully and trembling ask a boon,
The greatest you can give, or I can ask,
I may find favour in that day before you,
And bless a brother's love, that bids me live.

King. Talk not of asking, but command my power.
By Thor, the greatest of our Saxon gods,
I swear, the day that sees thee join'd to Rodogune,
Shall see thee crown'd, and partner of my throne.
Whate'er our arms shall conquer more in Britain,
Thine be the power, and mine but half the name.
With joy to thee, my Aribert, I yield
The wreaths and trophies of the dusty field;
To thee I leave this noblest isle to sway,
And teach the stubborn Britons to obey;

While from my cares to beauty I retreat,
 Drink deep the luscious banquet, and forget
 That crowns are glorious, or that kings are great.

[Exit.

Arib. " Oh, fatal love!—Curst unauspicious
 flame !

" Thy baleful fires blaze o'er us like a comet,
 " And threaten discord, desolation, rage,
 " And most malignant mischief."—Lov'd by Rodogune!

What I!—must I wed Rodogune!—Oh, misery?—
 " Fantastic cruelty of hoodwink'd chance!"
 There is no end of thought—The labyrinth winds,
 And I am lost for ever—Oh! where now,
 Where is my Ethelinda now!—that dear one,
 That gently us'd to breathe the sounds of peace,
 " Gently as dews descend, or slumbers creep;"
 That us'd to brood o'er my tempestuous soul,
 And hush me to a calm.

Enter SEOFRID and ETHELINDA.

Seof. Thus still to weep,
 Is to accuse my royal master's truth.
 He loves you with the best, the noblest meaning;
 With honour——

Ethel. Keep, oh, keep him in that thought,
 And save me from pollution. Let me know
 All miseries beside, each kind of sorrow,
 " And prove me with variety of pains,

“ Whips, racks, and flames;” for I was born to suffer:

And when the measure of my woes is full,
That power in whom I trust will set me free.

Arib. It cannot be—No, ’t is illusion all, [*Seeing her.*
Some mimic phantom wears the lovely form,
Has learn’d the music of her voice to mock me,
To strike me dead with wonder and with fear.

Ethel. And do I see thee then! my lord! my
Aribert!

What! once more hold thee in my trembling arms!
Here let my days, and here my sorrows end:
I have enough of life.

Seof. Ha! “ What is this!”

“ But mark a little farther.”

Ethel. Keep me here,
Oh, bind me to thy breast, and hold me fast;
For if we part once more, ’t will be for ever.
It is not to be told what ruin follows.

’T is more than death, ’t is all that we can fear,
And we shall never never meet again.

Arib. Then here, thus folded in each other’s arms,
Here let us here resolve to die together;
Defy the malice of our cruel fate,
And thus preserve the sacred bond inviolable,
“ Which heaven and love ordain’d to last for ever.”
But ’t is in vain, ’t is torn, ’t is broke already;
“ And envious hell, with its more potent malice,
“ Has ruin’d and deform’d the beauteous work of
heaven;”

Else, wherefore art thou here! tell me at once,
And strike me to the heart——But 'tis too plain :
I read thy wrongs——I read the horrid incest——

“ *Seof.* Ha! incest, said he? Incest—— [*Aside.*”

Ethel. Oh! forbear

The dreadful impious sound? I shake with horror
To hear it nam'd. Guard me, thou gracious
heaven,

Thou that hast been my sure defence till now,
Guard me from hell, and that its blackest crime.

Arib. Yes, ye celestial host, ye saints and angels,
She is your care, you ministers of goodness.
For this bad world is leagu'd with hell against her,
And only you can save her.—I myself, [*To Ethel.*
Ev'n I am sworn thy foe, I have undone thee,
My fondness now betrays thee to destruction.

Ethel. Then all is bad indeed.

Arib. Thou seest it not.

My heedless tongue has talk'd away thy life :
And mark the minister of both our fates.

[*Pointing to Seofrid.*

Mark with what joy he hugs the dear discovery,
And thanks my folly for the fatal secret :

“ Mark how already in his working brain,

“ He forms the well-concerted scheme of mischief :

“ 'Tis fix'd, 'tis done, and both are doom'd to
death——”

And yet there is a pause——If graves are silent,
And the dead wake not to molest the living,

Be death thy portion—die, and with thee die
The knowledge of our loves.

[*Aribert catches hold of Seofrid with one hand, with the other draws his sword, and holds it to his breast.*]

Seof. What means my lord?

Ethel. Oh, hold ! for mercy's sake restrain thy hand.
[*Holding his hand.*]

Blot not thy innocence with guiltless blood,
What would thy rash, thy frantic rage intend ?

Arib. Thy safety and my own——

Ethel. Trust 'em to heaven.

Seof. Has then my hoary head deserv'd no better,
Than to behold my royal master's son
Lift up his armed hand against my life ?
Oh, prince ! Oh, wherefore burn your eyes ? and why,
Why is your sweetest temper turn'd to fury ?

Arib. Oh, thou hast seen, and heard and know too
much ;

Hast pry'd into the secret of my heart,
And found the certain means of my undoing.

“ *Seof.* Where is the merit of my former life,

“ The try'd experience of my faithful years !

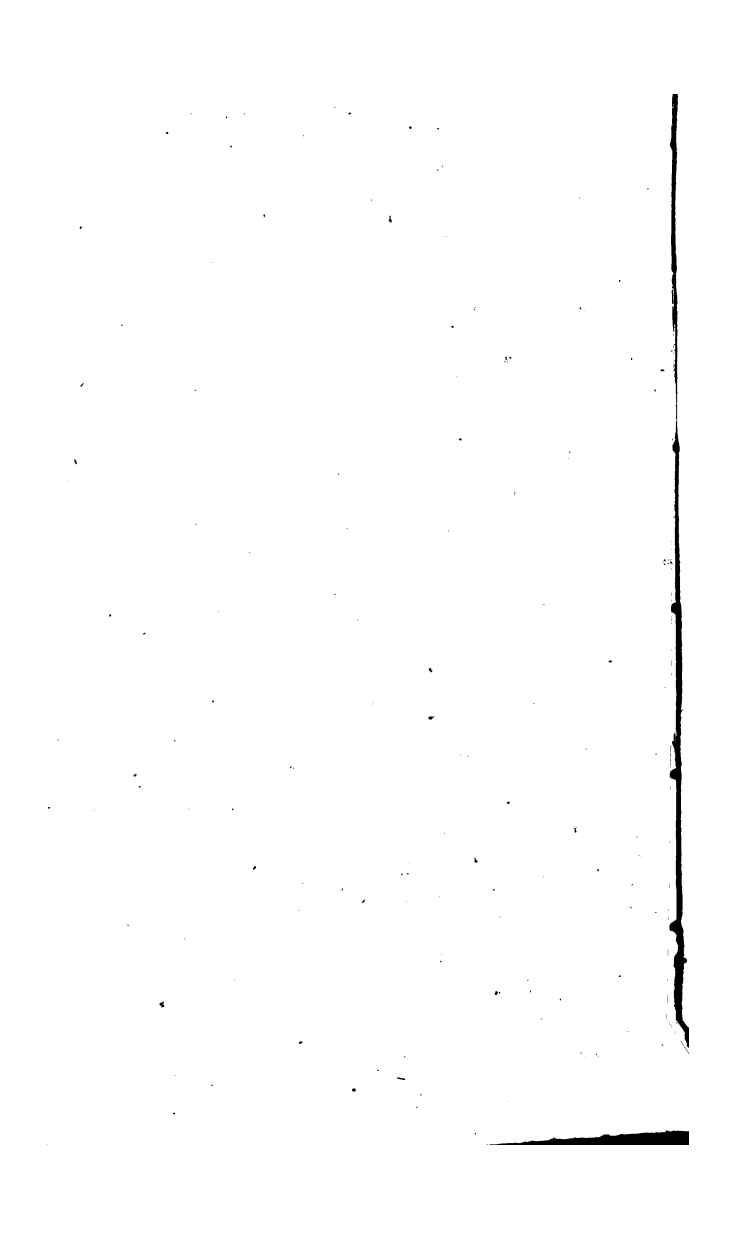
“ Are they forgot, and can I be that villain ?

“ *Arib.* Thou wert my father's fold, his faithful
servant.”

Seof. Now by the life, our empire's other hope,
Oh, royal youth ! I swear my heart bleeds for thee ;
Nor can this object of thy fond desire,
This lovely weeping fair be dearer to thee,



d. *J. Smith.*
British Library Strand Dec 27 1794.



Than thou art to thy faithful Seofrid.
I saw thy love, I heard thy tender sorrows,
With somewhat like an anxious father's pity,
With cares, and with a thousand fears for thee.

Arib. "What!" is it possible!

Seof. Of all the names
Religion knows, point the most sacred out,
And let me swear by that.

Arib. I would believe thee.

Forgive the madness of my first despair,

[*Letting fall his sword.*]

And if thou hast compassion, shew it now;
Be now that friend, be now that father to me,
Be now that guardian angel which I want;
Have pity on my youth, and save my love.

Seof. First then, to stay these sudden gusts of
passion,

That hurry you from reason, rest assured
The secret of your love lives with me only.
The dangers are not small that seem to threaten you;
Yet, would you trust you to your old man's care,
I durst be bold to warrant yet your safety.

Arib. "Perhaps the ruling hand of heav'n is in it;
" And working thus unseen by second causes,
" Ordains thee for its instrument of good,
" To me and to my love." Then be it so,
I trust thee with my life; but oh! yet more,
" I trust thee with a treasure that transcends
" To infinite-degrees the life of Aribert;"
I trust thee with the partner of my soul.

My wife, the kindest, dearest, and the truest,
That ever wore the name.

Scot. Now blessings on you——

May peace of mind and mutual joys attend
To crown your fair affections. May the sorrows,
That now sit heavy on you, pass away,
And a long train of smiling years succeed,
To pay you for the past. *Yet let me ask,*
For wonder, still, possesses all my mind,
Whence, and how grew your loves?

Arib. It was my chance,

On that distinguish'd day when valiant Flavian ;
A name renown'd among the British chiefs,
Fell by the swords of our victorious Saxons,
To rescue this his daughter from the violence
Of the fierce soldier's rage, " Nor need I tell thee,
" For thou thyself behold'st her, that I lov'd her,
" Lov'd her, and was belov'd ;" our meeting hearts
Consented soon, and marriage made us one.
Her holy faith and christian cross, oppos'd
Against the Saxon Gods, join'd with the memory
Of the dread king my father's fierce command,
Urg'd me to seek my Ethelinda's safety,
And hide her from the world. Just to my wish
Beneath the friendly covert of a wood,
Close by whose side the silver Medway ran,
I found a little pleasant, lonely cottage,
A mansion fit for innocence and love,
Had but a guard of angels dwelt around it
To keep off violence——But forc'd from thence——

By whom betray'd——Why I behold her here——
There I am lost——

Ethel. There my sad part begins.

It was the second morn since thou hadst left me,
When through the wood I took my usual way,
To seek the coolness of the well spread shade
That overlooks the flood. On a sear branch,
Low bending to the bank, I sate me down,
Musing and still; my hand sustain'd my head,
My eyes were fix'd upon the passing stream,
And all my thoughts were bent on heaven and thee;
When sudden through the woods a bounding stag
Rush'd headlong down, and plung'd amidst the river.
Nor far behind, upon a foaming horse,
There followed hard a man of royal port;
I rose, and would have sought the thicker wood;
But while I hurry'd on my hasty flight,
My heedless feet deceiv'd me, and I fell,
Straight leaping from his horse, he rais'd me up.
“ Surpriz'd and troubled at the sudden chance,
“ I begg'd he would permit me to retire;
“ But he, with furious, wild, disorder'd looks,”
With eyes and glowing visage flashing flame,
“ Swore 'twas impossible; he never would,
“ He could not leave me; with ten thousand ravings,
“ The dictates of his looser rage. At length”
He seiz'd my trembling hand: I shriek'd and call'd
To heaven for aid, when in a luckless hour,
Your faithful servants, Adelmar and Kenwald,
Came up, and lost their lives in my defence.

Arib. Where will the horror of thy tale have end?

Ethel. The furious king (for such I found he was),
By three attendants join'd, bore me away,
Resistless, dying, senseless with my fears.
Since then, a wretched captive, I deplore
Our common woes; for mine, I know, are thine.

“*Arib.* Witness the sorrows of the present hour,
“ The fears that rend ev'n now my lab'ring heart,
“ For thee, and for myself. And yet, alas!
“ What are the present ills, compar'd to those
“ That yet remain behind, for both to suffer?
“ Think where thy helpless innocence is lodg'd;
“ The rage of lawless power, and burning lust,
“ Are bent on thee; 'tis hell's important cause,
“ And all its blackest fiends are arm'd against thee.

Ethel. 'Tis terrible! my fears are mighty on me.
“ And all the coward woman trembles in me.
“ But, Oh! when hope and never-failing faith
“ Revive my fainting soul, and lift my thought
“ Up to yon azure sky, and burning lights above,
“ Methinks I read my safety written there;
“ Methinks I see the warlike host of heav'n
“ Radiant in glittering arms, and beamy gold,
“ The great angelic power's go forth by bands,
“ To succour truth and innocence below.
“ Hell trembles at the sight, and hides its head
“ In utmost darkness, while on earth each heart,
“ Like mine, is fill'd with peace and joy unutterable.”

Scot. Whatever gods there be, their care you are.
Nor let your gentle breast harbour one thought
Of outrage from the king: his noble nature,

Tho' warm, tho' fierce, and prone to sudden passions,
Is just and gentle, when the torrent rage
Ebbs out, and cooler reasons comes again.
Should he (which all ye holy pow'rs avert)
Urg'd by his love, rush on to impious force,
If that should happen, in that last exteme,
On peril of my life I will assist you,
And you shall find your safety in your flight.

Arib. Oh, guard her innocence; let all thy care
Be watchful, to preserve her from dishonour.

Seof. Rest on my diligence and caution safe.
E're twice the ruler of the day return,
To gild the chalky cliffs on Britain's shore,
Some favourable moment shall be found
To move the king, your royal brother's heart,
With the sad tender story of your loves.
'Till then be chear'd, and hide your inward sorrows
With well-dissembled necessary smiles:
Let the king read compliance in your looks,
A free and ready yielding to his wishes.
At present, to prevent his doubts, 't were fit
That you should take a hasty leave, and part.

Ethel. What! must we part?

Seof. But for a few short hours,
That you may meet in joy, and part no more.

Arib. Oh, fatal sound! Oh, grief unknown 'till now!
While thou art present, my sad heart seems lighter;
I gaze, and gather comfort from thy beauty;
"Thy gentle eyes send forth a quick'ning spirit,
"And feed the dying lamp of life within me."

But, oh! when thou art gone, and my fond eyes
Shall seek thee all around, but seek in vain,
What power, what angel shall supply thy place,
Shall help me to support my sorrows then,
“ And save my soul from death ? ”

Ethel. My life! my lord!

What would my heart say to thee!—but no more—
Oh, lift thy eyes up to that holy power,
Whose wondrous truths, and majesty divine,
Thy Ethelinda taught thee first to know;
There fix thy faith, and triumph o’er the world:
For who can help, or who can save besides?
Does not the deep grow calm, and the rude north
Be hush’d at his command? thro’ all his works,
Does not his servant Nature hear his voice?
Hear and obey? Then what is impious man,
That we should fear him, when heaven owns our
cause?

That heaven shall make my Aribert its care,
“ Shall to thy groans and sighings lend an ear,”
And save thee in the moment of despair.

Arib. Oh! thou hast touch’d me with the sacred
theme,

And my cold heart is kindled at thy flame:
“ An active hope grows busy in my breast,
“ And something tells me we shall both be blest.”
Like thine, my eyes the starry thrones pursue,
And heaven, disclos’d, stands open to my view;
And see the guardian angels of the good,
Reclining soft on many a golden cloud,

ACT III. THE ROYAL CONVERT.

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To earth they seem their gentle heads to bow,
And pity what we suffer here below ;
“ But oh ! to thee, thee most they seem to turn,
“ Joy in thy joys, and for thy sorrows mourn :
Thee, oh, my love, their common care they make,
Me to their kind protection too they take,
And save me for my Ethelinda's sake.

[*Exeunt* Seofrid and Ethelinda at one door,
Aribert at the other.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter SEOFRID.

Seofrid.

WHAT is the boasted majesty of kings,
Their godlike greatness, if their fate depend
Upon that meanest of their passions, love ?
The pile their warlike fathers toil'd to raise,
That noble monument of deathless fame,
A woman's hand o'er-turns. “ The cedar thus,
“ That lifted his aspiring head to heaven,
“ Secure, and fearless of the sounding axe,
“ Is made the prey of worms ; his root destroy'd,
“ He sinks at once to earth, the mighty ruin,
“ And triumph of a wretched insect's power.”
Is there a remedy in human wisdom,
My mind has left unsought, to help this evil ?
I would preserve 'em both, the royal brothers ;

But if their fates ordain that one must fall,
Then let my master stand. This Christian woman—
Ay, there the mischief comes! "What are our gods,
" That they permit her to defy their power?
" But that's not much, let their priests look to that.
" Where she but well remov'd"—But then the
king——

Why, absence, business, or another face,
A thousand things may cure him—would 't were done,
" And my head safe——That! let me look to that—"
But see, the husband comes! ha!—not ill thought,
It shall be try'd at least.——

Enter ATRIBERT.

Arib. Still to this place
My heart inclines, still hither turn my eyes,
Hither my feet unbidden find their way.
" Like a fond mother from her dying babe
" Forc'd by officious friends and servants care,
" I linger at the door, and wish to know,
" Yet dread to hear the fate of what I love."
Oh, Seofrid! dost thou not wonder much,
And pity my weak temper when thou seest me
Thus in a moment chang'd from hot to cold,
My active fancy glowing now with hopes,
Anon thus drooping; death in my pale visage,
My heart, and my chill veins, all freezing with
despair?

Seof. I bear an equal portion of your sorrows,
Your fears too all are mine. And, oh, my prince!

I would partake your hopes ; but my cold age,
Still apt to fear the worst——

Arib. What dost thou fear ?

“ *Seof.* Nay, nothing worse than what we both
have fear’d.

“ *Arib.* How! nothing!——Speak thy fear.

Seof. “ Why——nothing now——”

The king——“ that ’s all.”

Arib. The king!——“ Oh, that ’s too much !”

And yet——yet there is more, I read it plain
In thy dark sullen visage——“ like a storm

“ That gathers black upon the frowning sky,

“ And grumbles in the wind——But let it come,

“ Let the whole tempest burst upon my head,

“ Let the fierce lightning blast, the thunder rive me.”

And, oh! ’tis sure the fear of what may come,
Does far transcend the pain.

Seof. You fear too soon,

And fancy drives you much too fiercely on,

I do not say that what may happen, will :

Chance often mocks what wisely we foresee.

“ Besides, the ruling gods are over all,

“ And order as they please their world below.”

The king, ’tis true, is noble—but impetuous ;

“ And love, or call it by the coarser name,

“ Lust, is, of all the frailties of our nature,

“ What most we ought to fear ! the headstrong beast

“ Rushes along, impatient for the course,

“ Nor hears the rider’s call, nor feels the rein.”

Arib. What would’st thou have me think?

Seof. Think of the worst.

Your better fortune will arrive more welcome.
To speak then with that openness of heart
That should deserve your trust, I have my fears.
What if at some dead hour of night, the king
Intend a visit to your weeping princess?

Arib. Ha!——

Seof. “He may go, ’t is is true, with a fair purpose.”

Suppose her sunk into a downy slumber,
Her beating heart just tir’d, and gone to rest.
“Methinks I see her on her couch repos’d,
“The lovely, helpless, sweet, unguarded innocence;
“With gentle heavings rise her snowy breasts,
“Soft steals the balmy breath, the rosy hue
“Glow on her cheek, a deep vermilion dyes
“Her dewy lip, while peace and smiling joy
“Sit hush’d and silent on the sleeping fair,”
Then think what thoughts invade the gazing king;
Catch’d with the sudden flame at once he burns,
At once he flies resistless on his prey.
Waking, she starts distracted with the fright,
To Aribert’s lov’d name in vain she flies;
Shrieking she calls her absent lord in vain.
The king, possess’d of all his furious will——

Arib. First sink the tyrant ravisher to hell!
Seize him, ye fiends!——first perish thou and I!
Let us not live to hear of so much horror.
The cursed deed will turn me savage wild,
“Blot ev’ry thought of nature from my soul.

“ A brother !—I will rush and tear his breast,
 “ Be drunk with gushing blood,” and glut my ven-
 geance

With his incestuous heart.

Seof. It is but just

You should be mov’d, for sure the thought is dreadful.
 But keep this swelling indignation down,
 And let your cooler reason now prevail,
 That may perhaps find out some means of safety.

Arib. Talkest thou of safety !——we may talk of
 heaven,

May gaze with rapture on yon’ starry regions ;
 But who shall lend us wings to reach their height ?
 Impossible !——

Seof. There is a way yet left,

And only one.

Arib. Ha ! speak——

Seof. Her sudden flight.

Arib. Oh ! by what friendly means ? Be swift to
 answer,

Nor waste the precious minutes with delay.

Seof. The king, now absent from the palace, seems
 To yield a fair occasion for your wishes ;
 A private postern opens to my gardens,
 Thro’ which the beauteous captive might remove,
 ’Till night, and a disguise shall farther aid her,
 To fly with safety to the Britons’ camp.

’Tis true, one danger I might well object——

Arib. Oh ! do not, do not blast the springing hopes
 Which thy kind hand has planted in my soul,

If there be danger, turn it all on me.

Let my devoted head——

Seof. Nay!——“ ’t is not much,”

’T is but my life ; and I will gladly give it,
To buy your peace of mind.

Arib. Alas ! what mean’st thou ?

Seof. Does it not follow plain ? Shall not the king
Turn all his rage upon this hoary head ?

Shall not all arts of cruelty be try’d,

To find out tortures equal to my falsehood ?

“ Imagine you behold me bound and scourg’d,

“ My aged muscles harrow’d up with whips ;

“ Or hear me groaning on the rending rack,

“ Groaning and screaming with the sharpest sen

“ Of piercing pain ; or see me gash’d with knives

“ And sear’d with burning steel, ’till the score
marrow

“ Fries in the bones, and shrinking sinews start,

“ A smeary foam works o’er my grinding jaws,

“ And utmost anguish shakes my lab’ring frame ;

For thus it must be.

Arib. Oh, my-friend ! my father !

“ It must not be, it never can, it sha’ not.”

Wouldst thou be kind, and save my Ethelinda,

Leave me to answer all my brother’s fury.

The crime, the falsehood, shall be all my own.

Seof. Just to my wish.

[A.

Arib. Thou shalt accuse me to him.

Thou know’st his own admittance gave me entrai
Swear that I stole her, that I forc’d her from thee

Frame with thy utmost skill some artful tale,
And I'll avow it all.

Seof. Then have you thought
Upon the danger, sir?

Arib. Oh! there is none,
Can be no danger, while my love is safe.

Seof. Methinks, indeed, it lessens to my view.
When the first violence of rage is over,
The fondness of a brother will return,
And plead your cause with nature in his heart;
You will, you must be safe; and yet 't is hard,
And grieves me much I should accuse you to him.

Arib. 'T is that must cover the design. But fly,
"Lose not a minute's time."

Haste to remove her from this cursed place;
My faithful Oswald shall at night attend thee,
And help to guard her to the British camp;
"Thou know'st that is not far."

"*Seof.* Too near I know it. [Aside."

Arib. She has a brother there, the noble Lucius,
A gallant youth, and dear to brave Ambrosius;
To his kind care resign thy beauteous charge.

Seof. This instant I obey you. [Going.

Arib. Half my fears
Are over now——

Seof. One thing I had forgot.
It will import us much that you should seem
Inclin'd to meet the love of haughty Rodogune:
" 'T will cost you but a little courtly flattery,
"A kind respectful look, join'd with a sigh,

"A few soft tender words, that mean just nothing,
"Yet win most women's hearts." But see she comes,
Constrain your temper, sir; be false, and meet her
With her own sex's arts; pursue your task,
And doubt not all shall prosper to your wish.

[Exit Seofrid.

Arib. She comes, indeed! Now where shall I begin,
How shall I teach my tongue to frame a language
So different from my heart? Oh, Ethelinda!
My heart was made to fit and pair with thine,
Simple and plain, and fraught with artless tenderness;
Form'd to receive one love, and only one,
"But pleas'd and proud, and dearly fond of that,
"It knows not what there can be in variety,
"And would not if it could."

Enter RODOGUNE.

Rod. Why do I stay,
Why linger thus within this hated place,
Where ev'ry object shocks my loathing eyes,
And calls my injur'd glory to remembrance?
The king!—the wretch! but wherefore did I name
him!
Find out, my soul, in thy rich store of thought,
Somewhat more great, more worthy of thyself;
Or let the mimic fancy shew its art,
And paint some pleasing image to delight me.
Let beauty mix with majesty and youth,
Let manly grace be temper'd well with softness;
Let love, the god himself, adorn the work,



Act III.

THE ROYAL CONVERT.



M^{rs} WARD as RODOGUNE.
—O ye Gods! 'tis he himself.
London, Printed for J. Ball, British Library, Strand, Dec. 27 1734.

And I will call the charming phantom, Aribert.

Oh, Venus!—whither—whither would I wander?

Be hush'd, my tongue—"ye gods!"—'tis he himself—

[Seeing Aribert.]

Arib. When, fairest princess, you avoid our court,

And lonely thus from the full pomp retire,

Love and the graces follow to your solitude;

They croud to form the shining circle round you,

And all the train seems yours; "while purple majesty

"And all those outward shews which we call greatness,

"Languish and droop, seem empty and forsaken,

"And draw the wond'ring gazer's eyes no more.

"*Rod.* The courtier's art is meanly known in Britain,

"If your's present their service, and their vows,

"At any shrine but where their master kneels.

"You know your brother pays not his to me,

"Nor would I that he should.

"*Arib.* The hearts of kings

"Are plac'd, 't is true, beyond their subjects search;

"Yet might I judge by love's or reason's rules,

"Where shall my brother find on earth a beauty,

"Like what I now behold?

Rod. That you can flatter,

Is common to your sex; you say, indeed,

We women love it—and perhaps we do.

Fools that we are, we know that you deceive us,

And yet, as if the fraud were pleasing to us,

And our undoing joy—still you go on,

And still we hear you——But, to change the theme,
I'll find a fitter for you than my beauty.——

Arib. Then let it be the love of royal Hengist.

Rod. The king, your brother, could not chuse an
advocate,

Whom I would sooner hear on any subject,
'Bating that only one, his love, than you ;
Though you perhaps (for some have wondrous arts)
Could soften the harsh sound. The string that jars,
When rudely touch'd ungrateful to the sense,
With pleasure feels the master's flying fingers,
Swells into harmony, and charms the hearers.

Arib. Then hear me speak of love.——

Rod. But not of his.

Arib. 'T is true I should not grace the story much,
Rude and unskilful in the moving passion,
I should not paint its flames with equal warmth ;
Strength, life, and glowing colours would be wanting,
And languid nature speak the work imperfect.

Rod. Then, happ'ly yet your breast remains un-
touch'd ;

Tho' that seems strange ; you've seen the court of
Britain ;

'There, as I oft have heard, imperial beauty
Reigns in its native throne, like light in heaven ;
While all the fair ones of the neighb'ring world,
With second lustre meanly seem to shine,
The faint reflections of the glory there.

Arib. If e'er my heart incline to thoughts of love,

Methinks I should not (though perhaps I err)
Expect to meet the gentle passion join'd,
With pomp and greatness; courts may boast of beauty,
But love is seldom found to dwell amongst 'em.

Rod. Then courts are wretched.

Arib. So they seem to love.

From pride, from wealth, from business, and from
power,

Loathing he flies, and seeks the peaceful village;
He seeks the cottage in the tufted grove,
The russet fallows, and the verdant lawns,
The clear cool brook, and the deep woody glade,
Bright winter fires, and summer ev'nings sun:
These he prefers to gilded roofs and crowns;
Here he delights to pair the constant swain,
With the sweet, unaffected, yielding maid;
Here is his empire, here his choice to reign,
Here, where he dwells with innocence and truth.

Rod. To minds, which know no better, these are
joys;

But princes, sure, are born with nobler thoughts.
Love, is in them a flame that mounts to heaven,
And seeks its source divine, and kindred stars;
That urges on the mortal man to dare,
Kindles the vast desires of glory in him,
And makes ambition's sacred fires burn bright.
Nor you, howe'er your tongue disguise your heart,
Have meaner hopes than these:

Arib. Mine have been still
Match'd with my birth, a younger brother's hopes.

“*Rad.* Nay, more; methinks I read your future greatness;
“ And like some bard inspir’d, I could foretell
“ What wondrous things our gods reserve for you.
“ Perhaps, ev’n now, your better stars are join’d;
“ Auspicious love and fortune now conspire,
“ At once to crown you, and bestow that greatness,
“ Which partial nature, at your birth deny’d.”

Enter the King, Guards, and other Attendants.

King. She must, she shall be found, tho’ she be sunk
Deep to the centre, tho’ eternal night.

“ Spread wide her sable wing, to shade her beauties,
“ And shut me from her sight.” But say, thou traitor;
Thou that hast made the name of friendship vile,
And broke the bonds of duty and of nature,
Where hast thou hid thy theft?—“ So young, so false—
“ Have I not been a father to thy youth,
“ And lov’d thee with a more than brother’s love!
“ And am I thus repaid?”—But bring her forth,
Or by our gods thou dy’st.

Rad. What means this rage?

[*Aside.*

Arib. Then briefly thus: you are my king and brother,

The names which most I reverence on earth,
And fear offending most. Yet to defend
My honour and my love from violation,
O’er ev’ry bar resistless will I rush,
And, in despite of proud tyrannic power,
Seize and assert my right.

King. What, thine! thy right!

“ Riddles and tales,”

Arib. Mine, by the dearest tie,

By holy marriage mine, she is my wife.

Rod. “ Racks, tortures, madness seize me! Oh,”
confusion! [*Aside.*]

Arib. I see thy heart swells, and thy flaming visage
Reddens with rage at this unwelcome truth;

But since I know my Ethelinda safe,

I have but little care for what may happen.

“ To-morrow may be heaven’s—or yours to take,”

If this day be my last, why farewell life;

I hold it well bestow’d for her I love.

“ *Rod.* May sorrow, shame, and sickness overtake
her,

“ And all her beauties, like my hopes, be blasted.

[*Aside.* ”]

King. So brave! but I shall find the means to tame
you,

To make thee curse thy folly, curse thy love,

And to the dreadful gods, who reign beneath,

Devote thy fatal bride. She is a christian:

Remember that, fond boy, and then remember

That sacred vow, which, perjur’d as thou art,

Prostrate at Woden’s altar, and invoking

With solemn Runic rights, our country’s gods,

Thou mad’st in presence of our royal father.

Arib. Yes, I remember well the impious oath,
Hardly extorted from my trembling youth:

When, burning with misguided zeal, the king

Compell'd my knee to bend before his gods,
And forc'd us both to swear to what we knew not.

King. Now, by the honours of the Saxon race,
"A long and venerable line of heroes,"
I swear thou art abandon'd, lost to honour,
"And fall'n from ev'ry great and godlike thought.
"Some whining, coward priest has wrought upon
thee,

"And drawn thee from our brave forefathers' faith,"
False to our gods; as to thy king and brother.

Arib. 'Tis much beneath my courage and my truth,
To borrow any mean disguise from falsehood.
No!—'tis my glory that the christian light
Has dawn'd, like day, upon my darker mind,
And taught my soul the noblest use of reason;
"Taught her to soar aloft, to search, to know,
"That vast eternal fountain of her being;"
Then, warm with indignation, to despise
The things you call our country's gods, to scorn
And trample on their ignominious altars.

King. 'Tis well, sir—impious boy!—Ye Saxon gods;
And thou, Oh, royal Hengist! whose dread will
And injur'd majesty I now assert,
Hear, and be present to my justice, hear me,
While thus I vow to your offended deities
This traitor's life: he dies, nor ought on earth
Saves his devoted head. One to the priests;

[*Exit a Gent.*]

Bid 'em be swift, and dress their bloody altars
With ev'ry circumstance of tragic pomp;

To-day a royal victim bleeds upon 'em.
Rich shall the smoke and steaming gore ascend,
To glut the vengeance of our angry gods.

Rod. "At once ten thousand racking passions tear
me,

"And my heart heaves as it would burst my bosom."

Oh, can I, can I hear him doom'd to death,

Nor stir, nor breathe one single sound to save him!

It wo' not be—and my fierce haughty soul,

Whate'er she suffers, still disdains to bend,

To sue to the "curs'd," hated tyrant king.

Oh, love! Oh, glory!—Wouldst thou die thus tamely!

[*To Aribert.*

Is life so small a thing, so mean a boon,

As is not worth the asking?—"Thou art silent;

Wilt thou not plead for life?"—Intreat the tyrant,

And waken nature in his iron heart.

Arib. Life has so little in it good or pleasing,

That since it seems not worth a brother's cure,

'Tis hardly worth my asking.

King. Seize him, guards,

and bear him to his fate.

[*Guards seize Aribert, and bear him off.*

Rod. Yet, Hengist, know,

thou shalt dare to touch his precious life,

know that the gods and Rodogune prepare

the sharpest scourges of vindictive war.

Whichever way thou wilt, the sword shall still pursue

With vengeance, to a brother's murder due.

Given out from man, and mark'd for public scorn,

Thy ravish'd sceptre vainly shalt thou mourn.
And when, at length, thy wretched life shall cease,
When in the silent grave thou hop'st for peace,
Think not the grave shall hide thy-hated head ;
Still, still I will pursue thy fleeting shade ;
I curs'd thee living, and I'll plague thee dead.

[*Exit Rodogune.*

King. " On to the temple with him : " let her rave,
And prophecy ten thousand thousand horrors ;
I could join with her now, and bid 'em come ;
They fit the present fury of my soul.
" The stings of love and rage are fix'd within,
" And drive me on to madness. Earthquakes, whirl-
winds,
" A general wreck of nature now would please me."
For, Oh ! not all the driving wintry war,
When the storm groans, and bellows from afar ;
" When thro' the gloom the glancing lightnings fly,
" Heavy the rattling thunders roll on high,
" And seas and earth mix with the dusky sky ; "
Not all those warring elements we fear,
Are equal to the inborn tempest here ;
Fierce as the thoughts which mortal man controul,
When love and rage contend, and tear the lab'ring
soul.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

[*"The Scene is a Temple, adorned according to the Super-
 "stition of the ancient Saxons; in the middle are placed
 "their three principal Idols, Thor, Woden, and
 "Freya. Music is heard at a Distance, as of the
 "Priests preparing for the Sacrifice."*]

A Prison. Enter ARIBERT.

Aribert.

ALL night the bloody priests, a dreadful band,
 Have watch'd intent upon their horrid rites,
 "With many a dire and execrable prayer,
 "Calling the fiends beneath, the sullen demons
 "That dwell in darkness deep, and, foes to man,
 "Delight in reeking streams of human gore.
 "Now huddled on a heap, they murmur'd hoarse:
 "And, hissing, whisper'd round their mystic charms;
 "And now, as if by sudden madness struck,
 "With screaming shrill they shook the vaulted roof,
 "And vex'd the still, the silent solemn midnight.
 "Such, sure, in everlasting flames below,
 "Such are the groans of poor lamenting ghosts,
 "And such the howlings of the last despair.
 "Anon to sounds of woe, and magic strings,
 "They danc'd in wild fantastick measures round;
 "Then all at once they bent their ghastly visages
 "On me, and, yelling, thrice they cry'd out, Aribert!"
 I have endur'd their horrors—And, at length,

See, the night wears away, and chearful morn,
All sweet and fresh, spreads from the rosy east;
Fair nature seems reviv'd, and ev'n my heart
Sits light and jocund at the day's return,
And, fearless, waits an end of all its sufferings.

Enter one of the Guards, he delivers a letter to Aribet.

Guard. From Oswald, this, on peril of my life,
I have engag'd to render to your hands. [Exit.]

Arib. [Reads.] 'Seofrid has been just to his word:
he has deliver'd the fair Ethelinda to my charge: we
have happily past all the guards, and hope in two
hours to reach the Britons camp.'

'From your faithful Oswald.'

Thou hast nothing left on earth, my soul,
Worthy thy farther care. Why do I stay,
Why linger then, and want my heaven so long?
To live is to continue to be wretched,
And robs me of a great and glorious death.

Enter RODOGUNE with an Officer; he speaks to her entering.

Officer. Thus Offa to his beauteous sister sends:
Depend upon a brother's love and care,
To further all you wish.

Rod. 'Tis well; be near, [Exit Officer.]
And wait my farther order. "See, my heart,
"See there thy dearest choice, thy fond desire."
See, with how clear a brow, what chearful grace,
With all his native sweetness undisturb'd,

The noble youth attends his harder fate.
I came to join my friendly grief with yours, [*To Arib.*
To curse your tyrant brother, and deplore
Your youthful hopes, thus all untimely blasted ;
But you, I see, have learn'd to scorn your danger ;
You wear a face of triumph, not of mourning.
Has death so little in it ?

Arib. Oh ! 'tis nothing,
To minds that weigh it well : the vulgar fear it,
And yet they know not why. Since never any
Did from that dark and doubtful land as yet
Turn back again, to tell us 't is a pain.
To me it seems like a long wish'd-for happiness,
Beyond what e'en our expectation paints ;
'T is comfort to the soul, 't is peace, 't is rest ;
" It comes like slumber to the sick man's eyes.
" Burning and restless with a fever's rage,
" All night he tosses on his weary bed ;
" He tells the tedious minutes as they pass,
" And turns, and turns, and seeks for ease in vain :
" But if, at morning's dawn, sweet sleep falls on him,
" Think with what pleasure he resigns his senses,
" Sinks to his pillow, and forgets his pain."

Rod. Perhaps it may be such a state of indolence ;
But sure the active soul should therefore fear it.
" The gods have dealt unjustly with their creatures,
" If barely they bestow a wretched being,
" And scatter not some pleasures with the pain,
" To make it worth their keeping." Is there nothing
Could make you wish to live ?

Arib. Oh, yes! there is,
 There is a blessing I could wish to live for,
 To live, for years, for ages, to enjoy it;
 But far, alas! divided from my arms,
 It leaves the world a wilderness before me,
 With nothing worth desiring.

Rod. "Dull and cold!
 "Or cold at least to me; dull, dull indifference.

[*Aside.*"]

What if some pitying power look down from heaven,
 And kindly visit your afflicted fortunes?
 What if it send some unexpected aid,
 "Some generous heart, and some prevailing hand,
 "Willing to save, and mighty to defend.
 "Who from the gloomy confines of the grave,
 "Timely shall snatch, shall bring you back to life."
 And raise you up to empire and to love?

Arib. The wretched have few friends, at least on
 earth:

Then what have I to hope?

"*Rod.* Hope every thing,
 "Hope all that merit, such as yours, may claim,
 "Such as command the world, exacts their homage,
 "And makes ev'n all the good and brave your friends.

"*Arib.* And can you then vouchsafe to flatter mi-
 sery?
 "T' enrich so fall'n, so lost a thing as I am,
 "With the sweet breath of praise? So pious virgins
 "Rob the whole spring to make their garlands fine,
 "Then hang them on a senseless marble tomb,"

Rod. A burning purple flushes o'er my face,
And shame forbids my tongue, or I would say,
That I——Oh, Aribert!——I am thy friend.
Yet wherefore should I blush to own the thought?
For who——who would not be the friend of Aribert?

Arib. Why is this wondrous goodness lost on me?
Why is this bounty lavish'd on a bankrupt,
Who has not left another hour of life
To pay the mighty debt?

Rod. "Oh, let me yet,
" Yet add to it, and swell the sum yet higher;
" Nor doubt but fate shall find the means to pay it."
Know, then, that I have pass'd this live-long night
Sleepless and anxious with my cares for thee;
The gods have sure approv'd the pious thought,
And crown'd it with success; since I have gain'd
Alfred, the chief of mighty Woden's priests,
To find a certain way for thy escape.
One of the sacred habits is at hand,
Prepar'd for thy disguise; the holy man
Attends to guide thee to my brother's camp:
Myself——Oh, yet lie still, my beating heart—— [*Aside.*
Whatever dangers chance, myself will be
The partner and the guardian of thy flight.

Arib. Now what return to make——Oh, let me sink,
With all these warring thoughts together in me,
Blushing to earth, and hide the vast confusion!

Rod. Ye gods! he answers not, but hangs his head
In sullen silence——See! he turns away,
And bends his gloomy visage to the earth.

To what am I betray'd ! Oh, shame, dishonour,
And more than woman's weakness ! he has seen me,
Seen my fond heart, and scorns the easy prize.

" Blast me, ye lightnings, strike me to the centre,
" Drive, drive me down, down to the depths beneath :
" Let me not live, nor think——let me not think ;
" For I have been despis'd——ten thousand thousand,
" And yet ten thousand curses——Oh, my folly——

Arib. " Thus let me fall, thus lowly to the earth,
[*Kneeling.*

" In humble adoration of your goodness ;
" Thus with my latest accents breathe your name,
" And bless you ere I dies." Oh, Rodogune,
" Fair, royal maid ! to thee be all thy wishes,
Content and everlasting peace dwell with thee,
And every joy be thine ; nor let one thought
Of this ungrateful, this unhappy Aribert
Remain behind, to call a sudden sigh,
Or stain thee with a tear. Behold I go,
Doom'd by eternal fate, to my long rest ;
Then let my name too die, sink to oblivion,
And sleep in silence with me in the grave.

Rod. Dost thou not wish to live ?

Arib. I cannot.

Rod. Why ?

Behold, I give thee life.

Arib. And therefore——Oh,
Therefore I cannot take it ! I dare die,
But dare not be oblig'd. I dare not owe
What I can never render back. *Ethelinda* (

Rod. "Confusion!"

Is then the blessing, life, become a curse,
When offer'd to thee by my baleful hand?

"Arib. Oh, no! for you are all that's good and
gracious;

"Nature, that makes your sex the joy of ours,
"Made you the pride of both; she gave you sweetness,
"So mix'd with strength, with majesty so rais'd,
"To make the willing world confess your empire.
"And love, while they obey. Nor stay'd she there;
"But to the body fitted so the mind,
"As each where fashion'd singly to excel,
"As if so fair a form disdain'd to harbour
"A soul less great, and that great soul could find
"Nothing so like the heaven from whence it came,
"As that fair form to dwell in,

"Rod. Soothing sounds!

"Delightful flattery from him we love;
"But what are these to my impatient hopes! [Aside.

"Arib. Yet wherefore should this mighty mass of
wealth

"Be vainly plac'd before my wond'ring eyes,
"Since I must ne'er possess it, since my heart,
"Once giv'n, can ne'er return, can know no name
"But Ethelinda, only Ethelinda?
"Fix'd to its choice, and obstinately constant,
"It listens not to any other call.
"So rigid hermits that forsake the world,
"Are deaf to glory, greatness, pomps and pleasures;
"Severe in zeal, and insolently pious,

"They let attending princes vainly wait,
 "Knock at their cells, and lure them forth in vain."

Rod. How is she form'd, with what superior grace,
 This rival of my love? What envious god,
 In scorn of nature's wretched works below,
 Improv'd, and made her more than half divine?
 "How has he taught her lips to breathe ambrosia!
 "How dy'd her blushes with the morning's red,
 "And cloath'd her with the fairest beams of light,"
 To make her shine beyond me?

Arib. Spare the theme.

Rod. "But then her mind! ye gods, which of you all
 "Could make that great, and fit to rival mine?
 "What more than heavenly fire informs the mass?"
 Has she a soul can dare beyond our sex,
 Beyond e'en man himself, can dare like mine?
 Can she resolve to bear the secret stings
 Of shame and conscious pride, distracting rage,
 And all the deadly pangs of love despis'd?

Oh, no! she cannot, nature cannot bear it; [*Weping.*]

"It sinks ev'n me, the torrent drives me down,
 "The native greatness of my spirit fails,
 "Thus melts, and thus runs gushing thro' my eyes,
 "The floods of sorrow drown my dying voice,
 "And I can only call thee, cruel Aribert!

"*Arib.* Oh, thou, just Heaven, if mortal man may
 dare

"To look into thy great decrees, thy fate,
 "Were it not better I had never been,

"Than thus to bring affliction and misfortune,
"Thus curse what thou hadst made so good and fair?"

Rod. But see, the king and cruel train appear;
Nor can I save thee now. Thou hast thy wish; [*To Ar.*
But what remains for me? "My heart beats fast,
"And swells impatient at the tyrant's sight.
"My blood, erewhile at ebb, now flows again,
"And with new rage I burn." Since love is lost,
Come thou, revenge, succeed thou to my bosom,
And reign in all my soul. Yes, I will find her,
This fatal she, for whom I am despis'd.
Look that she be your master-piece, ye gods;
Let each celestial hand some grace impart,
To this rare pattern of your forming art;
Such may she be, my jealous rage to move,
Such as you never made till now, to prove
A victim worthy my offended love. [*Exit Rodogune.*

Enter at the other door the King, Guards, and other Attendants.

King. Hast thou bethought thee yet, perfidious boy?
Wo't thou yet render back thy theft? Consider—
The precipice is just beneath thy feet,
'T is but a moment, and I dash thee off,
To plunge for ever in eternal darkness.
Somewhat like nature has been busy here,
And made a struggle for thee in my soul;
Restore my love, and be again my brother.

Arib. "Rage, and the violence of lawless passion,
"Have blinded your clear reason; wherefore, else,

"This frantic wild demand?" What! should I yield,
Give up my love, my wife, my Ethelinda,
To an incestuous brother's dire embrace?
Oh, horror!—But, to bar the impious thought,
Know, Heaven and brave Ambrosius are her guard;
Ere this her flight hath reach'd the Britons camp,
And found her safety there.

King. Fled to the Britons!

Oh, most accursed traitor! Let her fly,
Far as the early day-spring in the east,
"Or to the utmost ocean, where the sun
Descends to other skies and worlds unknown;"
Ev'n thither shall my love take wing and follow,
To seize the flying fair. The Britons!—Gods!
Shall they with-hold her!—First my arms shall shake
Their island to the centre. But, for thee,
Think'st thou to awe me with that phantom, incest?
Such empty names may fright thy coward soul;
But know that mine disdains 'em. Bind him straight.

[To the Priests.]

"I wo' not lose another thought about thee. [*To Ar.*
"Begin the rites."

*And drag him to yon holy altar, where
Stand ministring priests to dye the hallow'd steel
Deep in his christian blood. The gods demand him.*

Arib. Why then, no more. But if we meet again,
As, when the day of great account shall come,
Perhaps we may, may'st thou find mercy there,
More than thou shew'st thy brother here. Farewell.

King. "Farewell." To death with him, "and end the dreamer.

[*The Priests bind Aribert, and lead him to the altar, while the solemn music is playing.*"]

Enter SEOFRID.

Seof. Stay! "Haste, and break off your inauspicious rites;"

The instant dangers summon you away;
Destruction threatens in our frightened streets,
And the gods call to arms.

King. What means the fear
That trembles in thy pale, thy haggard visage?
Speak out; and ease this labour of thy soul.

Seof. Oh, fly, my lord! the torrent grows upon us,
And while I speak we're lost. Fierce Offa comes;
From ev'ry part his crowding ensigns enter,
And this way waving bend. With idle arms
Your soldiers careless stand, and bid 'em pass;
"Some join, but all refuse to arm against 'em;
"They call 'em friends, companions, and their countrymen."

A chosen band, led by the haughty princess,
Imperious Rodogune, move swiftly hither
To intercept your passage to the palace.
That only strength is left, then fly to reach it.

King. Curs'd chance! but haste, dispatch that traitor strait;

They sha' not bar my vengeance.

Seof. Sacred sir,

Think only on your safety. For the prince,
Your crown, but more your love, a thousand reasons,
All urge you to defer his fate; time presses,
Or I could speak 'em plain.

King. Then hear me, soldier,
I give him to thy charge.

“Seof. They come, my lord.” [Shout.

King. Look to him well; for by yon dreadful altars,
Thy life shall pay for his, if he escape:
First kill him, plunge thy poignard in his bosom,
And see thy king reveng'd.

[*Exeunt King, Seofrid, Guards and Attendants.*

Officer. Be cheer'd, my lord,
Nor keep one doubt of me; I am your slave.
The king is fled, and with him all your dangers.
Fate has resery'd you for some glorious purpose;
And see, your guardian goddess comes to save you,
To break your bonds, and make you ever happy.

Enter RODOGUNE and Soldiers.

Rod. Well have our arms prevail'd; behold, he lives,
Ungrateful as he is, by me he lives.
Do I not come with too officious haste, [To Aribert.
Once more to press the burden, life, upon you?
To offer, with an idiot's importunity,
The nauseous benefit you scorn'd before?

Arib. If I refus'd the blessing from your hands,
Think it not rudely done with sullen pride;
Since life and you are two of Heaven's best gifts,
Yet both should be receiv'd, both kept with honour.

Rod. However, live—yes, I will bid thee live,
No matter what ensues. Fly far away,
Forget me, blot my name from thy remembrance,
And think thou ow'st me nothing—What, in bonds !
Well was the task reserv'd for me. But thus
I break thy chain——Would I could break my own.
[*Aside.*"]

Enter an Officer.

Officer. A party of our horse, that late went forth
To mark the order of the Britons camp,
Met in their course some servants of the king :
'or so they call'd themselves. Ours judg'd 'em traitors,
And would have seiz'd, as flying to the foe.
After a sharp resistance some escap'd,
The rest, for so your princely brother wills,
Without attend your order.

Rod. Let 'em enter.

A woman !

Enter ETHELINDA, with Guards.

Ethel. Is there then an end of sorrows !

[*Running to Aribert.*]

Has then that cruel chance that long pursu'd me,
That vex'd me with her various malice long,
Been kind at last, and blest me to my wish,
Lodg'd me once more within thy faithful arms !

Arib. Oh, my foreboding heart ! Oh, fatal meeting !

Ethel. Why droops my love, my lord, my Aribert ?
Why dost thou sigh and press me ? and, Oh ! wherefore,

Wherefore these tears that stain thy manly visage?
They told me Heaven had strove for thy deliverance,
Had rais'd thee up some kind, some great preserver,
To save thee from thy cruel brother's hand.

Why, therefore, dost thou mourn, when thou art blest?
Or does some new affliction wound thee? say;
Perhaps I am the cause.

Rod. By all the tortures,
The pangs that rend my groaning breast, 't is she,
My curs'd, my happy rival. " See the syren,
" See how, with eager eyes, he drinks her charms;
" Mark how he listens to her sweet allurements;
" She winds herself about his easy heart,
" And melts him with her soft enchanting tongue."

Ethel. Wo't thou not answer yet?

Arib. Oh, Ethelinda!

Why art thou here? Is this the Britons camp?
Is Lucius here? Hast thou a brother here,
To guide thy helpless innocence from wrong?

Ethel. Have I not thee?

Arib. Me!——What can I do for thee?
For we are wretched both.

Rod. I'll doubt no more.
My jealous heart confesses her its foe,
And beats and rises, eager to oppose her;
Nor shall she triumph o'er me. " No, ye gods!
" If I am doom'd by you to be a wretch,
" She too shall suffer with me." Prince, you seem
[To Aribert.
To know this prisoner, whom the Saxon chiefs

Accuse of flying to our foes, the Britons.
 However, I will think more nobly of you,
 Than to believe you conscious of the treason :
 Nor can you grieve, if justice dooms her to
 That fate she has deserv'd. Bear her to death.

[To the Guard.

Ethel. Alas ! to death !—what mean you ? Say by
 what

Unknown, unwilling crime have I offended ?
 To you, fair Princess, since 't is you that judge me,
 “ Though now this moment to my eyes first known,”

[Kneeling.

To you I bend, to you I will appeal,
 And learn my crime from you.

Arib. Learn it from me ;
 I am thy crime, 'tis Aribert destroys thee.

Ethel. If thou art my offence, I've sinn'd indeed,
 Ev'n to a vast and numberless account,
 For from the time when I beheld thee first,

[To Aribert.

My soul has not one moment been without thee ;
 Still thou hast been my wish, my constant thought,
 Like light, the daily blessing of my eyes,
 And the dear dream of all my sweetest slumbers.

Rod. Oh, the distracting thought !

Ethel. Nor will you think it [To Rodogune.
 A crime to love, “ for that I love is true.”
 In your fair eyes I read your native goodness.
 Hap'ly some noble youth shall in your breast
 Kindle the pure, the gentle flame, and prove

As dear to you as Aribert to me ;

“ Would it be just that you should die for loving ?

“ Think but on that, and I shall find your pity ;

“ For pity sure and mercy dwell with love.”

Rod. Be dumb for ever, let the hand of death
Close thy bewitching eyes, and seal thy lips,
That thou may'st look and talk no more delusion.
For, oh, thy ev'ry glance, each sound shoots thro'
me,

And kills my very heart. Hence, bear her hence.

“ My peace is lost for ever—but she dies.—”

Arib. Oh, hold! “ for——”

“ *Rod.* Wherefore do'st thou catch my garment ?

“ Thou that hast set me on the rack ; com'st thou

“ To double all my pains, and with new terrors,

“ Dreadful, to shake my agonizing soul ?”

Arib. What shall I say to move thee ?

Rod. Talk for ever,

Winds shall be still, and seas forget to roar,
The din of babbling crowds, and peopled cities,
Al' shall be hush'd as death, while thou art speaking,
For there is music in thy voice.

Arib. Then hear me ;

With gentlest patience, with compassion hear me,
Thus while I fall before thee, grasp thee thus,
Thus with a bleeding heart and streaming eyes,
Implore thee for my Ethelinda's life.

Rod. Tho' thou were dearer to my doating eyes,
Than all they knew besides ! tho' I could hear thee
While ages past away ; yet, by the gods,

If such there are, who rule o'er love and jealousy,
 " And swell our heaving breasts with mortal
 passions."

I swear she dies, my hated rival dies.

Arib. Then I have only one request to make,
 Which sha' not be deny'd; to share one fate,
 And die with her I love.

Rod. Ungrateful wretch!
 Yet I would make thy life my care——

Arib. " No more:
 " Now I scorn life indeed. Though you had beauty,
 " More than the great Creator's bounteous hand
 " Bestow'd on all his various works together,
 " Though all ambition asks, the kingly purple,"
 Though life, though glory, " and" wealth, and
 power, were yours to give;
 Though length of days and health were in your hand,
 And all were to be mine, yet I would choose
 To turn the gift with indignation back,
 And rather fold my Ethelinda thus,
 And sleep for ever with her in the grave.

Rod. Then take thy wish, and let both die to-
 gether.

Yes, I will tear thee from my fond remembrance,
 And be at ease for ever.

Ethel. Oh, my love!
 What can I pay thee back for all this truth?
 What! but, like thee, to triumph in my fate,
 And think it more than life to die with thee.
 " Haste then, ye virgins, break the tender turf,

“ And let your chaster hands prepare the bed,
“ Where my dear lord and I must rest together ;
“ Then let the myrtle and the rose be strow'd,
“ For 't is my second better bridal day.
“ On my cold bosom let his head be laid,
“ And look that none disturb us ;
“ 'Till the last trumpet's sound break our long sleep,
“ And call us up to everlasting bliss.”

Rod. Hence with 'em, take 'em, drive 'em from my sight,

The fatal pair——

[*Exeunt all but Rod.*]

That look shall be my last.

I feel my soul impatient of its bondage,

Disdaining this unworthy idle passion,

And struggling to be free. Now, now it shoots,

It tow'rs upon the wing to crowns and empire ;

While love and Aribert, those meaner names,

Are left far, far behind, and lost for ever.

“ So if by chance the eagle's noble offspring,

“ Ta'en in the nest, becomes some peasant's prize,

“ Compell'd, awhile he bears his cage and chains,

“ And like a pris'ner with the clown remains ;

“ But when his plumes shoot forth, and pinions
swell,

“ He quits the rustic and his homely cell,

“ Breaks from his bonds, and in the face of day,

“ Full in the sun's bright beams he soars away ;

“ Delights thro' heaven's wide pathless way to go,

“ Plays with Jove's shafts, and grasps his dreadful
bow,

" Dwells with immortal gods, and scorns the world
below." [Exit.

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Palace. Enter the KING and SEOFRID.

King.

" No ! I will follow the fond chace no more ;
" No more pursue the flying phantom, glory ;
" But lay me down, and rest in sullen peace ;
" Secure of all events to come, and careless
" If the gods guide the world by fate or fortune.
" Let 'em take back the worthless crown they gave,
" Since they refuse their better blessings to me."

Seof. If not to glory, yet awake to love ;
And though regardless of your royal state,
Yet live for Ethelinda, live to save her,
Doom'd by the cruel Rodogune to die !
Helpless and desolate methinks she stands,
And calls you to her aid.

King. " What ! doom'd to die !
" Shall those dear glowing beauties then grow cold,
" Pale, stiff, and cold ? nor shall I fold her once ;
" Shall she not pant beneath my strong embrace,
" Swell to desire, and meet my furious joy ?
" Shall she not breathe, and look, and sigh, and
murmur,
" 'Till I am lost for ever, sunk in ecstasies,

"And buried in ten thousand thousand sweets?"

"What! shall she die? No, by the god of arms,

"No—I will—"

Seofrid, yes! I'll once more rouse me to the war,
And snatch her from her fate.

Seof. Then hear the means
By which the gods preserve your crown and love.
Oswald, of all our Saxon chiefs, the first,
And nearest to your brother's heart, had drawn
The chosen strength of all the British youth,
Under the leading of the gallant Lucius,
To save the prince from your impending wrath.
By secret marches they are near advanc'd,
And meant this night to make their bold attempt.

King. How favours this my purpose?

Seof. Thus, my lord.

I have prevail'd their force shall join with all
Those faithful Saxons, who are still your subjects.
Your foes, fierce Offa and his haughty sister,
Secure and insolent with new success,
Despise your numbers and inferior strength,
And may this night with ease become your prey.
Oswald attends without to learn your pleasure,
And bear it to the valiant British chiefs.

King. The Britons! Gods!—the nation which I
hate.

That Oswald too!—That traitor still has been
Avow'd the slave of Aribert, his creature,
His bosom fawning parasite—No matter;
They serve the present purpose of my heart,

And I will use 'em now. Taught by thy arts,
I will look kindly on the wretch I loath,
And smile on him I destine to destruction.
Bid him approach.

[*Exit Seofrid, and re-enter with Oswald.*]

Seof. The valiant Oswald, sir.

King. Your friend has spoke at large your bold
design,

Worthy your courage, and your princely friend.
And howso'er the meddling hand of chance
Has sown the unlucky seeds of strife between us,
Yet I have still a brother's part in Aribert.
Nor shall my hand be slow to lead you on,
'Till we have driven these haughty inmates forth,
And independent fix'd that sovereign right,
Which our brave fathers fought to gain in Britain.

Osw. With honourable purpose are we come,
With friendly greeting from the Briton's king,
And the fair offer of an equal peace.
This only he demands ; send back the troops
Which late arrived with Offa, now your foe
As well as his ; and set your princely brother,
With the fair Ethelinda, safe and free ;
These just conditions once confirm'd to Lucius,
Ambrosius is the friend of royal Hengist.
The Britons then shall join their arms with yours,
To drive out these unhospitable guests,
And leave you peaceful lord of fruitful Kent,
The first possession of your warlike father.

King. In friendly part take we his proffer'd love.
Bear this our signet to the gallant Lucius,

[*Giving his ring to Oswald.*]

Our bond and pledge of peace, "which in full form
"We will confirm, soon as the present danger
"Is well remov'd, and better time allows."
Haste thou to join our valient friends the Britons;
My faithful Seofrid shall soon attend you,
With full instructions for your private march,
And means of entrance here; with the whole order
In which we mean t' attack the common foe.

Osw. I go, my lord, and may the gods befriend us.

[*Exit.*]

[*The King looks after Oswald, then turns and walks
two or three times hastily across the stage.*]

Seof. Ha! whence this sudden start! [*Aside.*] That
wrathful frown,

Your eyes fierce glancing, and your changing visage,
Now pale as death, now purpled o'er with flame,
Give me to know your passions are at odds,
And your whole soul is up in arms within.

King. Oh, thou hast read me right, hast seen me
well;

To thee I have thrown off that mask I wore;
And now the secret workings of my brain
Stand all reveal'd to thee. "I tell thee, Seofrid,
"There never was a medly of such thinking,
"Ambition, hatred, mischief and revenge,
"Gather like clouds on clouds; and then anon,
"Love, like a golden beam of light, shoots through,

“Smiles on the gloom, and my heart bounds with pleasure.”

But 't is no time for talk. To Siwald fly,
My soldier and my servant, often try'd ;
Bid him draw out a hundred chosen horse,
And hold 'em ready by the night's first fall.
Let 'em be all of courage, well approv'd ;
Such as dare follow whereso'er I lead,
Where-e'er this night, or fate, or love shall bear me.

Seof. I hasten to obey you. But, alas !

Might your old man have leave to speak his fears—

King. I read thy care for me in all those fears ;
But be not wise too much. Oft thou hast told me,
Love is a base, unmanly, whining passion.
This night I mean to prove it, and forsake it.

“I was, 'tis true, the slave of this soft folly,

“And waited at an awful, abject distance,

“Restrain'd by idle rules, which scornful beauty

“And sullen honour dictate ; but no more.”

No ! by our gods, I'll suffer it no more.

Seof. Where will this fury drive you ?

King. To my heaven,

To Ethelinda's arms. This very evening,
While the deluded Britons urge our foes,
And wreak my vengeance on the Saxon Offa,
Amidst the first disorder of the fray,
'T will not be hard to seize the weeping fair :
And, while the fighting fools contend in vain,
With all the wings the god of love can lend,
To bear her far away.

Seof. Ha! ———whither mean you
To bend this rash, I fear, this fatal flight?

King. Near where the Medway rolls her gentle waves,
To meet the Thames in his imperial stream,
Thou know'st I have a castle of such strength,
As well may scorn the menace of a siege,
Thither I mean to bear my lovely prize,
And, in despite of all the envious world,
There riot in her arms. But break we off.
Haste to perform my orders; and then follow,
And share in all the fortunes of thy king. [*Exit King.*]

Seof. Fools that we are! to vex the lab'ring brain,
And waste decaying nature thus with thought;
To keep the weary spirits waking still;
To goad and drive 'em in eternal rounds
"Of restless racking care; 'tis all in vain.
"Blind goddess, Chance, henceforth I follow thee.
"The politicians of the world may talk,
"May make a mighty bustle with their foresight,
"Their schemes and arts; their wisdom is thy slave."
[*Exit Seof.*]

SCENE IV.

Changes to a Temple. Enter ARIBERT and ETHELINDA.

Ethel. When this, the last of all our days of sorrow,
Flies fast, and hastens to fulfil its course;
When the blest hour of death at length is near,
Why dost thou mourn? When that good time is come,

When we shall weep no more, but live for ever :
In that dear place, where no misfortunes come ;
Where age, and want, and sickness are not known,
And where this wicked world shall cease from troubling,
When thick descending angels crowd the air,
And wait with crowns of glory to reward us ;
Why art thou sad, my love, my lord, my Aribert ?

“ *Arib.* It comes, indeed, the cruel moment comes,
“ That must divide our faithful loves for ever.
“ A few short minutes more, and both shall perish,
“ Sink to the place where all things are forgotten.
“ Our youth and fair affections shall be barren ?
“ Shall know no joys, which other lovers know.
“ Shall leave no name behind us, no posterity :
“ Only the sad remembrance of our woes,
“ To draw a tear from each who reads our story.
“ And dost thou ask me wherefore I am sad ?

“ *Ethel.* ’T is hard indeed, ’t is very hard to part.
“ Though my heart grieves to want its heaven so long,
“ Pangs for its bliss, and sickens with delay ;
“ Yet I could be content to live for thee.
“ Yes, I will own thy image stands before me,
“ And intercepts my journey to the stars,
“ Calls back the fervent breathings of my soul
“ To earth and thee ; with longing looks I turn,
“ Forget my flight, and linger here below.”

Arib. Is it decreed by Heaven’s eternal will,
That none shall pass the golden gates above,
But those who sorrow here ? Must we be wretched ?
Must we be drown’d in many floods of tears,

To wash our deep, our inborn stains away,
Or never see the saints, and taste their joys ?

Ethel. The great o'er-ruling Author of our beings,
Deals with his creature, man, in various ways,
Gracious and good in all ; some feel the rod,
And own, like us, the father's chast'ning hand.

" Seven times, like gold, they pass the purging flame,

" And are at last refin'd ; while gently some

" Tread all the paths of life without a rub,

" With honour, health, with friends and plenty bless'd.

" Their years roll round in innocence and ease.

" Hoary at length, and in a good old age,"

They go declining to the grave in peace,

And change their pleasures here for joys above.

" *Arib.* To have so many blessings heap'd on me,

" Transcends my wish. I ask'd but only thee.

" Give me, I said, but life and Ethelinda ;

" Let us but run the common course together,

" Grow kindly old in one another's arms,

" And take us to thy mercy then, good Heaven.

" But Heaven thought that too much.

Ethel. If our dear hopes,

" If what we value most on earth, our loves,

" Are blasted thus by death's untimely hand ;

" If nothing good remains for us below,

" So much the rather let us turn our thoughts,

" To seek beyond the stars our better portion ;

" That wondrous bliss which heaven reserves in store,

" Well to reward us for our losses here ;

“ That bliss which heaven, and only only heaven can
give,
“ Which shall be more to thee than Ethelinda,
“ And more to me—Oh, vast excess of happiness!
“ Where shall my soul make room for more than
Aribert!”

Enter RODOGUNE and Attendants.

Rod. If, while she lives, still I am doom'd to suffer,
Why I am cruel to myself;—No more—
'T is foolish pity—how secure of conquest
The soft enchantress looks! but be at peace;
Beat not, my heart, for she shall fall thy victim.
Appear, ye priests, ye dreadful holy men;
“ Ye ministers of the god's wrath and mine,”
Appear and seize your sacrifice, this Christian.
Bear her to death, and let her blood atone
For all the mischiefs of her eyes and tongue.

[*Solemn music.*]

SCENE V.

*Draws, and discovers the inner Part of the Temple. A
Fire is prepared on one of the Altars, near it are placed
a Rack, Knives, Axes, and other Instruments of Torture;
several Priests attending as for a Sacrifice.*

Arib. See where death comes, array'd in all its
terrors;
The rack, consuming flames, and wounding steel.
Your cruel triumph had not been complete,

Without this pomp of horror. Come, begin;
 Tear off my robes, and bind me to the rack;
 Stretch out my corded sinews, 'till they burst,
 And let your knives drink deep the flowing blood.
 You shall behold how a prince ought to die,
 And what a Christian dares to suffer.

[*The Guards seize Aribert and Ethelinda.*

Priest. Hold!—

The prince's fate is yet deferr'd: the woman
 Is first ordain'd to suffer.—Ere she fall
 A victim to our gods, she must kneel to 'em,
 Or prove the torture.

Ethel. I disdain those gods.

Offic. Bind her straight, and bear her to the rack.

Arib. What her!—Oh, merciless!

Ethel. Oh, stay me not, my love! with joy I go,
 To prove the bitter gains of death before thee,
 And lead thee on in the triumphant way.

Arib. And can my eyes endure it! to behold
 Thy tender body torn! these dear, soft arms,
 That oft have wreath'd their snowy folds about me,
 Distorted, bent, and broke with rending pain!
 Oh, Rodogune! read, read in my full eyes,
 More than my tongue can speak, and spare my love.—

Rod. "And couldst thou find no other name but
 that?"

"Thy love!—Oh, fatal, curst, distracting sound!"
 No, I will steel my heart against thy prayer,
 And whisper to myself with sullen pleasure,

The gods at length are just, and thou shalt feel
Pains, such as I have known.

Arib. Let me but die,
Cut off this hated object from your sight.——

Rod. “Nor that——for know that I can too deny;
“And make thee mourn thy coldness and disdain.”
No more! I’ll hear no more!

“*Arib.* They bind her! see!
“See with rude cords they strain her tender limbs,
“Till the red drops start from their swelling channels,
“And with fresh crimson paint her dying paleness.
“Oh, all ye host of heaven! ye saints and angels!

“*Ethel.* Oh, stay thy tears, and mourn no more
for me;

“Nor fear the weakness of my woman’s soul,
“For I am arm’d, and equal to the combat.
“In vain they lavish all their cruel arts,
“And bind this feeble body here in vain;
“The free, impassive soul mounts on the wing,
“Beyond the reach of racks and tort’ring flames,
“And scorns their tyranny”——Oh, follow thou!
Be constant to the last, be fix’d, my Aribert.
T’is but a short, short passage to the stars.
Oh, follow thou! Nor let me want thee long;
And search the blissful regions round in vain.

[*Solemn music.*

“*Enter an Officer.*

“*Officer.* Arm, royal maid, and take to your defence,

" The king with sudden fury sallies forth,
 " And drives our outmost guards with foul confusion.
 " *Rod.* The king! what frenzy brings the mad-
 man on
 " Thus headlong to his fate?—But let him come,
 " His death shall fill my triumph—wealth and honours,
 " The noblest, best reward, shall wait the man,
 " Whose lucky sword shall take his hated head."

Enter a second Officer, his Sword drawn.

2d Officer. Hengist is here; he bears down all before him:

The Britons too have join'd their arms to his,
 And this way bend their force.

Rod. Fly to my brother, *[To her Attendants.*
 And call him to our aid.

[Shouts within, and clashing of swords.

King. *[Within.]* Slave, give me way,

" Or I will tear thy soul"—

Sold. *[Within.]* You pass not here.

Seof. *[Within.]* What, know'st thou not the king?
 —Oh, cursed villain!

*Enter the King wounded, SEOFRID, OSWALD, and
 Soldiers with their swords drawn. Oswald runs to
 Aribert.*

Seof. Perdition on his hand—you bleed, my lord!

King. My blood flows fast—What, can I languish
 now!

So near my wish—lend me thy arm, old Seofrid,

To bear me to her—ha! bound to the rack!

Merciless dogs—ye most pernicious slaves!

“ And stand ye, stupid, haggard and amaz’d!”

Fly, swift as thought, and set her free this moment,

“ Or by my injur’d love, a name more sacred

“ Than all your function knows, your gods and you,

“ Your temples, altars, and your holy shrines,

“ Your holy trumpery shall blaze together.”

[*They unbind Ethelinda.*

Rod. ’T is vain to rave and curse my fortune now,

Thou native greatness of my soul befriend me,

And help me now to bear it as I ought.

King. The feeble lamp of life shall lend its blaze,

To light me—thus far—only—and no farther.

[*Falling at Ethelinda’s feet.*

Yet I look up, and gaze on those bright eyes,

As if I hop’d to gather heat from thence,

Such as might feed the vital flame for ever.

Ethel. Alas! you faint! your hasty breath comes short,

And the red stream runs gushing from your breast.

Call back your thoughts from each deluding passion,

“ And wing your parting soul for her last flight;

“ Call back your thoughts to all your former days,

To every unrepented act of evil;

And sadly deprecate the wrath divine.

King. Oh, my fair teacher, you advise in vain;

“ The gods and I have done with one another.

“ This night I meant to rival them in happiness.

“ Spight of my brother, and thy cruel coldness,

" This night I meant t' have past within thy arms.

Ethel. Oh, horror!

King. But 't is gone." Those envious gods
Have done their worst, and blasted all my hopes;
They have despoil'd me of my crown and life,
By a slave's hand——But I forgive 'em that.
Thee—they have robb'd me of my joys in thee——
Have trod me down to wither in the grave.——

Seef. My master, and my king.

King. Old man, no more:

I have not leisure for thy grief—Farewel——
Thou, Aribert——shalt live, and wear my crown—
Take it, and be more blest with it than I was.
But Ethelinda——she too shall be thine:
That——that's too much. This world has nothing
in it

So good to give—the next may have—I know not—

[*The King dies.*]

Arib. " There fled the fierce, untam'd, disdainful
soul."

Turn thee from death, and rise, my gentle love;
A day of comfort seems to dawn upon us,
And Heaven, at length, is gracious to our wishes.

Ethel. So numberless have been my daily fears,
And such the terrors of my sleepless nights,
That still, methinks, I doubt th' uncertain happiness:
Tho' at the music of thy voice, I own
My soul is hush'd, it sinks into a calm,
And takes sure omen of its peace from thee,

Osw. To end your doubts, your brother, the brave
Lucius, [To Ethel.

Will soon be here—ev'n now he sends me word
Fierce Offa and the Saxons fly before him;
The conqu'ring Britons fence you round from danger,
And peace and safety wait upon your loves.

Arib. Nor you, fair princess, frown upon our happiness;

Still shall my grateful heart retain your goodness,
And still be mindful of the life you gave.

Nor must you think yourself a pris'ner here:

Whene'er you shall appoint, a guard attends,
To wait you to your brother's camp with honour.

Rod. Yes, I will go; fly, far as earth can bear me,
From thee, and from the face of man for ever.

Curs'd be your sex, the cause of all our sorrows;
Curs'd be your looks, your tongues, and your false
arts,

That cheat our eyes, and wound our easy hearts;

"Curs'd may you be, for all the pains you give,

"And for the scanty pleasures we receive;

Curs'd be your brutal power, your tyrant sway,

By which you bend, and force us to obey.

Oh, nature! partial goddess, lend thy hand,

Be just for once, and equal the command;

Let woman, once, be mistress in her turn,

Subdue mankind beneath her haughty scorn,

And smile to see the proud oppressor mourn.

[Exit Rodogune.

Osw. The winds shall scatter all those idle curses

Far, far away from you, while every blessing
Attends to crown you. From your happy nupt
From royal Aribert, of Saxon race,
Join'd to the fairest of the British dames,
Methinks I read the peoples future happiness ;
And Britain takes its pledge of peace from you.

Ethel. Nor are those pious hopes of peace in vain
Since I have often heard an holy sage,
A venerable, old, and saint-like hermit.

“ With visions often bless'd, and oft in thought
“ Rapt to the highest, brightest seats above,”
Thus, with divine, prophetic knowledge fill'd,
Disclose the wonders of the times to come :
“ Of royal race a British queen shall rise,
“ Great, gracious, pious, fortunate and wise ;
“ To distant lands she shall extend her fame,
“ And leave to latter times a mighty name :
“ Tyrants shall fall, and faithless kings shall bleed,
“ And groaning nations by her arms be freed.
“ But chief this happy land her care shall prove,
“ And find from her a more than mother's love.
“ From hostile rage she shall preserve it free,
“ Safe in the compass of her ambient sea :
“ Tho' fam'd her arms in many a cruel fight,
“ Yet most in peaceful arts she shall delight,
“ And her chief glory shall be to unite :
“ Picts, Saxons, Angles, shall no more be known,
“ But Briton be the noble name alone.
“ With joy their ancient hate they shall forego,
“ While discord hides her baleful head below :

“ Mercy, and truth, and right she shall maintain,
“ And ev’ry virtue croud to grace her reign :
“ Auspicious Heaven on all her days shall smile,
“ And with eternal union bless her British isle.”

*One gen’ral state this nation shall arise,
In arms unrival’d, and in councils wise;
Picts, Saxons, Angles, shall no more be known,
But Britain be the noble name alone;
To distant lands she shall extend her fame,
And leave, to latest times, a glorious name;
Her naval powers shall rule the circling sea,
And all her children shall be brave and free.*

[Exeunt.]

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by ETHELINDA.

*THE bus’ness of the day being now gone through,
I quit the saint, and am like one of you ;
As well to look to, tho’ not quite so good ;
I bate in spirit, but keep my flesh and blood.
The moral of this play being rightly scann’d,
Is, he that leaves his own dear wife is damn’d.
I leave to you to make the application :
The doctrine, tho’ a little out of fashion,
May be of use in this same sinful nation.
What think you of the matter ? Which of you
Would for his spouse, like my true turtle do ?
When wealth and beauty both at once importune,
Who would not leave his wife to make his fortune ?*

To some, I know it may appear but oddly,
That this place, of all others, should turn godly :
But what of that ? since some good folks there are,
Would gladly be instructed any where ;
Nor should you scorn the weakness of the teacher :
The wisest man is not the ablest preacher.
Eve'n we, poor women, have sometimes the pow'r,
Read as you are, and rich in learning's store,
To teach you men what you ne'er knew before.
To no enthusiastic rage we swell,
Nor foam, nor act Tom Tumbler out of zeal.
But tho' we don't pretend to inspiration,
Yet like the prophets of a neighbour nation,
Our teaching chiefly lies in agitation.
Perhaps, indeed, such are your wand'ring brains,
Our author might have spar'd his tragic pains ;
By that you've supp'd, and are set-in to drinking,
Some sweeter matters will employ your thinking ;
With nymphs divine writ on each glass before ye,
You'll be but little better for our story.
But since the parting hour, tho' late, will come,
And all of you, at least, as I presume,
May find some kind, instructive sbe at home,
Then curtain lectures will, I hope, be read,
Those morals then, which from your thoughts were fled,
Shall be put home to you, and taught a-bed.

THE END.

THE
MAN OF THE WORLD.

A
COMEDY,
BY CHARLES MACKLIN, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,
By Permission of the Manager.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

LONDON:

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MDCCXCV.

Bij

TO
EARL CAMDEN.

MY LORD,

THE Permission with which your Lordship has been pleased to honour me, calls for the warmest acknowledgments of respect and gratitude. The polite condescension, with which, before that time; I had been admitted to your Lordship's presence, was always considered by me as the happiest incident of my life. I knew from what a height your Lordship beheld me in my humble station. You looked, I may say, from SHAKSPERE's Cliff, and saw, more than half way down—a man gathering samphire. Repeated obligations taught me to flatter myself, that, in the evening of my days, I had obtained a patron; and what at first was vanity, soon turned to gratitude.

I will not attempt, my Lord, to disguise, that in my ambition to prefix an illustrious name to this edition, there was a secret tincture of self-interest. Under your Lordship's patronage, I had no doubt of success. The facility with which my request was granted, shewed with what benevolence you were ready to relieve the wants, and soothe the languour of declining age. But I forbear to enlarge on the

subject. I am allowed to inscribe such works as mine to your Lordship, but not to speak the language of my heart; and thus, while I know what is due to your virtues, I am bound to consider how little your ear will endure.

But, my Lord, since truth itself is suspected in a dedication; since, as your Lordship is pleased to say, it is seldom read, and never believed; I hope I may be permitted to descend to an humbler subject. Old age is narrative, and delights in egotism. I beg leave to avail myself of the privilege. The honour of being distinguished by LORD CAMDEN, has put me on better terms with myself; and, though I feel the symptoms natural to long life, I can boast with pride, that I know the value of the obligation, and to whom I am indebted.

My memory is not so bad, but I can still remember the eminent lawyer, who figured at the bar forty years ago, and soon became the chosen friend of the great EARL OF CHATHAM. I remember him in the office of Attorney-General, supporting at once the prerogative of the crown, and the rights of the people; a friend to the liberty of the press, yet a controller of licentiousness, and a firm defender of the principles of the revolution. I remember the same great lawyer presiding in the Court of Common Pleas; and I was present on a great occasion, when general warrants, that subtle invention of a former age, died at his feet.

I remember the same great judge in the highest court of judicature, deciding, like LORD HARDWICK, with even-handed Justice; and, after a regular graduation of honours, I now see him President of the Council, where he sits in judgment, dispensing law and equity to all his Majesty's foreign dominions; and, as SHAKSPERE says—bearing his faculties so meek, so clear in his great office, that a pure administration of justice is acknowledged to flow through all parts of the British empire.

My memory, my Lord, is not exhausted, but I hasten to a recent fact.—When the libel-bill was depending in Parliament, I know who was the orator in the cause of the people and the constitution.—By that bill, which, with your Lordship's support, has happily passed into a law, I saw it determined, that, when a jury is sworn to try the matters in issue, craft and chicane are no longer to teach twelve men to perjure themselves, by resigning the chief part of their duty to the discretion of the court, which has been emphatically called—the law of tyrants.

But it is not for me to spread the canvas, and injure the portrait by such weak colouring as mine. History, my Lord, will have a better memory than I have. In that page, posterity will be taught to honour the statesman, whose comprehensive mind embraces the light of reason, the principles of natural justice, and the spirit of the British constitution.

These are the things, my Lord, which, with every Briton, I remember with pleasure. In such a case it

is natural to boast of my memory. That I in the same purpose retain that faculty to the end of my days, and that the memory of LORD CAMDEN, and the obligations which he has bestowed upon me, may be the last to fade from my mind, is a consummation devoutly to be wished for.

I have the honour to remain,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's most grateful,

And most devoted humble servant

CHARLES MA

10th Dec.
1792.

Dramatis Personæ.

COVENT GARDEN.

Men.

SIR PERTINAX MACSYCOPHANT,	-	Mr. Wilson.
EGERTON, - - -	-	Mr. Lewis.
LORD LUMBERCOURT, - -	-	Mr. Thompson.
SIDNEY, - - - -	-	Mr. Aickin.
MELVILLE, - - -	-	Mr. Hull.
COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE, -	-	Mr. Cubitt.
SERJEANT EITHERSIDE, -	-	Mr. Macready.
SAM, - - - -	-	Mr. Ledger.
JOHN, - - - -	-	Mr. Rock.
TOMLINS, - - - -	-	Mr. Evatt.

Women.

LADY MACSYCOPHANT, - -	-	Miss Platt.
LADY RODOLPHA LUMBERCOURT,	-	Mrs. Pope.
CONSTANTIA, - - -	-	Mrs. Mountain.
BETTY HINT, - - - -	-	Mrs. Rock.
NANNY, - - - -	-	Mrs. Deverett.



THE
MAN OF THE WORLD.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Library. Enter BETTY and SAM.

Betty.

THE Postman is at the gate, Sam ;—pray step and take in the letters.

Sam. John the gardner is gone for them, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. Eid John bring them to me, Sam : tell him I am here in the Library.

Sam. I'll send him to your ladyship in a crack, madam. *[Exit.*

Enter NANNY.

Nanny. Miss Constantia desires to speak to you, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. How is she now ?—any better, Nanny ?

Nanny. Something, but very low spirited still. I verily believe it is as you say.

Betty. O ! I would take my book oath of it. I can not be deceived in that point, Nanny.—Ay, ay—her

business is done, she is certainly breeding, depend upon it.

Nanny. Why, so the housekeeper thinks too.

Betty. Nay, I know the father, the man that ruined her.

Nanny. The deuce you do!

Betty. As sure as you are alive, Nanny, or I am greatly deceived—and yet, I can't be deceived neither.—Was not that the cook that came galloping so hard over the common just now?

Nanny. The same: how very hard he galloped; he has been but three quarters of an hour, he says, coming from Hyde-Park Corner.

Betty. And what time will the family be down?

Nanny. He has orders to have the dinner ready by five; there are to be lawyers, and a great deal of company here—he fancies there is to be a private wedding to-night, between our young Master Charles, and Lord Lumbercourt's daughter, the Scotch lady, who, he says, is just come post from Bath in order to be married to him.

Betty. Ay, ay, Lady Rodolpha—nay, like enough—for I know it has been talked of a good while:—Well, go tell Miss Constantia that I will be with her immediately.

Nanny. I shall, Mrs. Betty.

[Exit.]

Betty. So!—I find they all believe the impertinent creature is breeding—that's pure! It will soon reach my lady's ears, I warrant.

Enter JOHN.

Well, John, ever a letter for me?

John. No, Mrs. Betty, but here is one for Miss Constantia.

Betty. Give it me.---Hum! my lady's hand.

John. And here is one which the postman says is for my young master—but it's a strange direction. [*Reads.*] 'To Charles Egerton, Esq.'

Betty. O! yes, yes, that is for Master Charles, John: for he has dropped his father's name of Macsycophant, and has taken up that of Egerton---the parliament has ordered it.

John. The Parliament!---pr'ythee, why so, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. Why, you must know, John, that my lady, his mother, was an Egerton by her father: she stole a match with our old master, for which all her family on both sides have hated Sir Pertinax, and the whole crew of the Macsycophants ever since.

John. Except Master Charles, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. O! they dote upon him, though he is a Macsycophant---he is the pride of all my lady's family: and so, John, my lady's uncle, Sir Stanley Egerton, dying an old bachelor, and, as I said before, mortally hating our old master, and all the crew of the Macsycophants, left his whole estate to Master Charles, who was his godson---but on condition that he should drop his father's name of Macsycophant, and take up that

of Egerton—and that is the reason, John, why the parliament has made him change his name.

John. I am glad that Master Charles has got the estate, however; for he is a sweet-tempered gentleman.

Betty. As ever lived.—But come, John, as I know you love Miss Constantia, and are fond of being where she is---I will make you happy; you shall carry her letter to her.

John. Shall I, Mrs. Betty? I am very much obliged to you.—Where is she?

Betty. In the housekeeper's room, settling the desert—Give me Mr. Egerton's letter, and I'll leave it on the table in his dressing-room; I see it's from his brother Sandy.—So---now go and deliver your letter to your sweetheart, John.

John. That I will, and I am much beholden to you for the favour of letting me carry it to her: for though she should never have me, yet I shall always love her, and wish to be near her, she is so sweet a creature.—Your servant, Mrs. Betty. [Exit.]

Betty. Your servant, John.—Ha, ha, ha! poor fellow! he perfectly dotes on her; and daily follows her about with nosegays and fruit, and the first of every thing in the season.—Ay, and my young Master Charles too is in as bad a way as the gardener: in short, every body loves her, and that's one reason why I hate her.—For my part, I wonder what the deuce the men see in her---a creature that was taken in for charity; I am sure she's not so handsome. I wish she was out of the family once;---if she was, I might

then stand a chance of being my lady's favourite myself---ay, and perhaps of getting one of my young masters for a sweetheart, or at least the chaplain : but as to him, there would be no such great catch if I should get him. I will try for him, however, and my first step shall be to tell the doctor all I have discovered about Constantia's intrigues with her spark at Hadley.---Yes---that will do, for the doctor loves to talk with me, loves to hear me talk too; and I verily believe---he, he, he! that he has a sneaking kindness for me, and this story will make him have a good opinion of my honesty, and that, I am sure, will be one step towards-----O! bless me, here he comes, and my young master with him. I'll watch an opportunity to speak to him as soon as he is alone, for I will blow her up I am resolved, as great a favourite and as cunning as she is. [Exit.]

Enter EGERTON in great warmth and emotion; SIDNEY following, as in conversation.

Sid. Nay, dear Charles, but why are you so impetuous? Why do you break from me so abruptly?

Eger. *[With great warmth.]* I have done, sir; you have refused. I have nothing more to say upon the subject. I am satisfied.

Sid. *[With a glow of tender friendship.]* Come, come---correct this warmth, it is the only weak ingredient in your nature, and you ought to watch it carefully: If I am wrong, I will submit without reserve; but consider the nature of your request, and how it would

affect me : from your earliest youth, your father has honoured me with the care of your education, and the general conduct of your mind ; and, however singular and morose his temper may be to others, to me he has ever been respectful and liberal. I am now under his roof too, and because I will not abet an unwarrantable passion by an abuse of my sacred character, in marrying you beneath your rank, and in direct opposition to your father's hopes and happiness---you blame me---you angrily break from me, and call me unkind.

Eger. [With tenderness and conviction.] Dear Sidney, for my warmth I stand condemned : but for any marriage with Constantia, I think I can justify it upon every principle of filial duty---honour---and worldly prudence.

Sid. Only make that appear, Charles, and you know you may command me.

Eger. [With great filial regret.] I am sensible how unseemly it appears in a son to descant on the unamiable passions of a parent ; but as we are alone and friends, I cannot help observing in my own defence, that when a father will not allow the use of reason to any of his family---when his pursuit of greatness makes him a slave abroad, only to be a tyrant at home---when a narrow partiality to Scotland, on every trivial occasion, provokes him to enmity even with his wife and children, only because they dare give a national preference where they think it most justly due ; and when, merely to gratify his own ambition, he would marry his son into a family he detests ; [*great warmth.*]

sure, Sidney, a son thus circumstanced (from the dignity of human reason, and the feelings of a loving heart) has a right—not only to protest against the blindness of a parent, but to pursue those measures that virtue and happiness point out.

Sid. The violent temper of Sir Pertinax, I own, cannot be defended on many occasions, but still—your intended alliance with Lord Lumbercourt—

Eger. [*With great impatience.*] O! contemptible!—a trifling, quaint, haughty, voluptuous, servile tool—the mere lacquey of party and corruption; who, for the prostitution of near thirty years, and the ruin of a noble fortune, has had the despicable satisfaction, and the infamous honour of being kicked up and kicked down—kicked in and kicked out, just as the insolence, compassion, or convenience of leaders predominated: and now, being forsaken by all parties, his whole political consequence amounts to the power of franking a letter, and the right honourable privilege of not paying a tradesman's bill.

Sid. Well, but dear Charles, you are not to wed my lord, but his daughter.

Eger. Who is as disagreeable to me for a companion, as her father for a friend, or an ally.

Sid. What—her Scotch accent, I suppose, offends you?

Eger. No, upon my honour; not in the least: I think it entertaining in her;—but were it otherwise—in decency, and indeed in national affection, (being a

Scotchman myself) I can have no objection to her on that account---besides, she is my near relation.

Sid. So I understand. But pray, Charles, how came Lady Rodolpha—who, I find, was born in England, to be bred in Scotland?

Eger. From the dotage of an old, formal, obstinate, stiff, rich, Scotch grandmother, who, upon a promise of leaving this grandchild all her fortune, would have the girl sent to her to Scotland, when she was but a year old, and there has she been ever since; bred up with this old lady in all the vanity and unlimited indulgence that fondness and admiration could bestow on a spoiled child—a fancied beauty, and a pretended wit.

Sid. O! you are too severe upon her.

Eger. I do not think so, Sidney; for she seems a being expressly fashioned by nature, to figure in these days of levity and dissipation: her spirits are inexhaustible; her parts strong and lively; with a sagacity that discerns, and a talent not unhappy in pointing out the weak side of whatever comes before her—but what raises her merit to the highest pitch in the laughing world, is her boundless vanity and spirits in the exertion of those talents, which often render her much more ridiculous than the most whimsical of the characters she exposes; [*in a tone of friendly affection.*] And is this a woman fit to make my happiness? this the partner that Sidney would recommend to me for life? to you who best know me, I appeal.

Sid. Why, Charles, it is a delicate point; unfit for

me to determine; besides, your father has set his heart upon the match.

Eger. [*Impatiently.*] All that I know:—but still I ask and insist upon your candid judgment—is she the kind of woman that you think could possibly contribute to my happiness? I beg you will give me an explicit answer.

Sid. The subject is disagreeable; but since I must speak—I do not think she is.

Eger. [*In a start of friendly rapture.*] I know you do not; and I am sure you never will advise the match.

Sid. I never did.—I never will.

Eger. [*With a start of joy.*] You make me happy; which, I assure you, I never could be with your judgment against me in this point.

Sid. And yet, Charles, give me leave to observe, that Lady Rodolpha, with all her ridiculous and laughing vanity, has a goodness of heart, and a kind of vivacity that not only entertains, but, upon seeing her two or three times, she improves upon you; and when her torrent of spirits abates, and she condescends to converse gravely, you really like her.

Eger. Why ay; she is sprightly, good humoured; and, though whimsical, and often too high in her colouring of characters, and in the trifling business of the idle world, yet I think she has principles, and a good heart; [*With a glow of conjugal tenderness.*] but in a partner for life, Sidney (you know your own precept, and your own judgment), affection; capricious in its nature, must have something even in the

external manners; nay, in the very mode, not only of beauty, but of virtue itself—which both heart and judgment must approve, or our happiness in that delicate point cannot be lasting.

Sid. I grant it.

Eger. And that mode—that amiable essential I never can meet—but in Constantia. You sigh.

Sid. No. I only wish that Constantia had a fortune equal to your's. But pray, Charles, suppose I had been so indiscreet as to have agreed to marry you to Constantia—would she have consented, think you?

Eger. That I cannot say positively; but I suppose so.

Sid. Did you never speak to her upon that subject, then?

Eger. In general terms only; never directly requested her consent in form, [*He starts into a warmth of amorous resolution.*] but I will this very moment; for I have no asylum from my father's arbitrary design, but my Constantia's arms.—Pray, do not stir from hence: I will return instantly. I know she will submit to your advice—and I am sure you will persuade her to my wish---as my life, my peace, my earthly happiness, depend on my Constantia. [*Exit.*]

Sid. Poor Charles! he little dreams that I love Constantia too; but to what degree I knew not myself, till he importuned me to join their hands. Yes—I love—but must not be a rival; for he is dear to me as fraternal affinity:---my benefactor, my friend---and that name is sacred:---it is our better self; and ever ought to be preferred; for the man who gratifies his passions

at the expence of his friend's happiness, wants but a head to contrive, for he has a heart capable of the blackest vice.

Enter BETTY, running up to Sidney.

Betty. I beg pardon for my intrusion, sir. I hope, sir, I don't disturb your reverence?

Sid. Not in the least, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. I humbly beg you will excuse me, sir:—but I wanted to break my mind to your honour—about a scruple that lies upon my conscience: and indeed I should not have presumed to trouble you, sir, but that I know you are my young master's friend, and my old master's friend---and indeed—a friend to the whole family: [*Runs up to him, and curtsies very low.*] for to give you your due, sir, you are as good a preacher as ever went into a pulpit.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! do you think so, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. Ay, in truth do I; and as good a gentleman too as ever came into a family, and one that never gives a servant a bad word, nor that does any one an ill turn neither behind their back nor before their face.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! why you are a mighty well-spoken woman, Mrs. Betty, and I am mightily beholden to you for your good character of me.

Betty. Indeed, sir, it is no more than you deserve, and what all the world and all the servants say of you.

Sid. I am much obliged to them, Mrs. Betty—But pray what are your commands with me?

Betty. Why, I'll tell you, sir:—to be sure I am but a servant, as a body may say---and every tub should

stand upon its own bottom ; but [*She takes hold of him familiarly, looks first about cautiously, and speaks in a low familiar tone of great secrecy.*] my young master is now in the china-room, in close conference with Miss Constantia ---I know what they are about---but that is no business of mine ; and therefore I made bold to listen a little, because you know, sir, one would be sure---before one took away any body's reputation.

Sid. Very true, Mrs. Betty---very true, indeed.

Betty. O! heavens forbid that I should take away any young woman's good name, unless I had a good reason for it ; but, sir, [*With great solemnity.*] if I am in this place alive, as I listened, with my ear close to the door, I heard my young master ask Miss Constantia the plain marriage question, upon which I started and trembled, nay, my very conscience stirred within me so, that I could not help peeping thro' the key-hole.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! and so your conscience made you peep through the key-hole, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. It did indeed, sir:---and there I saw my young master upon his knees---lord bless us---and what do you think he was doing? kissing her hand as if he would eat it, and protesting, and assuring her, he knew that you, sir, would consent to the match, and then the tears ran down her cheeks as fast---

Sid. Ay!

Betty. They did indeed. I would not tell your reverence a lie for the world.

Sid. I believe it, Mrs Betty ; and what did Constantia say to all this?

Betty. Oh!---Oh!---she is sly enough; she looks as if butter would not melt in her mouth; but all is not gold that glitters; smooth water, you know, sir, runs deepest:---I am sorry my young master makes such a fool of himself---but---um!---take my word for it he is not the man; for though she looks as modest as a maid at a christening, [*Hesitating.*] yet---ah!---when sweethearts meet, in the dusk of the evening, and stay together a whole hour, in the dark grove, and embrace, and kiss, and weep at parting---why then you know, sir, it is easy to guess all the rest.

Sid. Why, did Constantia meet any body in this manner?

Betty. [*Starting with surprise.*] O! heavens!--I beg, sir, you will not misapprehend me; for I assure you I do not believe they did any harm---that is, not in the grove; at least, not when I was there; and she may be honestly married for aught I know. O! lud! sir, I would not say an ill thing of Miss Constantia for the world; for to be sure she is a good creature: 'tis true my lady took her in for charity, and indeed has bred her up to the music and figures---ay, and reading all the books about Homer, and Paradise, and gods, and devils, and every thing in the world---as if she had been a dutchess: but some people are born with luck in their mouths, and then, as the saying is, you may throw them into the sea; [*Deposits herself most affectedly.*] but, if I had had dancing-masters, and music-masters, and French mounseers to teach me, I believe I might have read the globes, and the maps,

and have danced, and have been as clever as other folks.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! no doubt on it, Mrs. Betty;—but you mentioned something of a dark walk; kissing; a sweetheart, and Constantia.

Betty. [*Starts into a cautious hypocrisy.*] O! lud! sir—I don't know any thing of the matter: she may be very honest, for aught I know: I only say, that they did meet in the dark walk; and all the servants observe that Miss Constantia wears her stays very loose, looks very pale, is sick in the morning, and after dinner; and as sure as my name is Betty Hint, something has happened that I won't name; but, nine months hence, a certain person in this family may ask me to stand god-mother, for I think I know what's what, when I see it, as well as another.

Sid. No doubt you do, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. [*Gries, turns up her eyes, and acts a most friendly hypocrisy.*] I do, indeed, sir. I am very sorry for Miss Constantia. I never thought she would have taken such courses—for in truth I love her as if she was my own sister; and though all the servants say that she is breeding—yet, for my part, I don't believe it; but, one must speak according to one's conscience, you know, sir.

Sid. Oh! I see you do.

Betty. [*Going, and returning.*] I do, indeed, sir; and so your servant, sir: but I hope your worship won't mention my name in this business; or that you had any item from me.

Sid. I shall not, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. For, indeed, sir, I am no busy-body, nor do I love fending nor proving; and, I assure you, sir, I hate all tattling and tattling, and gossiping, and backbiting, and taking away a person's good name.

Sid. I observe you do, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. I do, indeed, sir. I am the farthest from it in the world.

Sid. I dare say you are.

Betty. I am, indeed, sir; and so your humble servant,

Sid. Your servant, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. [*Aside, in great exultation.*] So! I see he believes every word I say—that's charming. I'll do her business for her, I am resolved. [*Exit.*]

Sid. What can this ridiculous creature mean by her dark walk, her private spark, her kissing, and all her slanderous insinuations against Constantia, whose conduct is as unblameable as innocence itself? I see envy is as malignant in a paltry waiting wench, as in the vainest or most ambitious lady of the court.—It is always an infallible mark of the basest nature; and merit in the lowest, as well as in the highest station, must feel the shaft of envy's constant agents—falsehood and slander.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir, Mr. Egerton and Miss Constantia desire to speak with you in the china room.

Sid. Very well, Sam. [*Exit Sam.*] I will not see them.—What is to be done? inform his father of his

intended marriage—no, that must not be; for the overbearing nature and ambitious policy of Sir Pertinax would exceed all bounds of moderation; for he is of a sharp, shrewd, unforgiving nature. He has banished one son already, only for daring to differ from his judgment concerning the merits of a Scotch and English historian. But this young man must not marry Constantia.—Would his mother were here! She, I suppose, knows nothing of his indiscretion: but she shall, the moment she comes hither. I know it will offend him; no matter: it is our duty to offend, when that offence saves the man we love from a precipitate action, which the world must condemn, and his own heart, perhaps, upon reflection, for ever repent: yes, I must discharge the duty of my function, and of a friend, though I am sure to lose the man whom I intend to serve.

[Exit.]

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter CONSTANTIA and EGERTON.

Constantia.

MR. Sidney is not there, sir,

Eger. I assure you I left him, and begged he would stay till I returned.

Con. His prudence, you see, sir, has made him retire; therefore we had better defer the subject till he is present; in the mean time, sir, I hope you will per-

mit me to mention an affair that has greatly alarmed and perplexed me: I suppose you guess what it is.

Eger. I do not, upon my word.

Con. That is a little strange. You know, sir, that you and Mr. Sidney did me the honour of breakfasting with me this morning in my little study.

Eger. We had that happiness, madam.

Con. Just after you left me, upon opening my book of accounts, which lay in the drawer of the reading-desk, to my great surprise, I there found this case of jewels, containing a most elegant pair of ear-rings, a neck-lace of great value, and two bank bills in this pocket-book, the mystery of which, sir, I presume you can explain.

Eger. I can;

Con. They were of your conveying then?

Eger. They were, madam.

Con. I assure you they startled and alarmed me.

Eger. I hope it was a kind alarm; such as blushing virtue feels, when, with her hand, she gives her heart and last consent.

Con. It was not indeed, sir.

Eger. Do not say so, Constantia: come, be kind at once; my peace and worldly bliss depend upon this moment.

Con. What would you have me do?

Eger. What love and virtue dictate.

Con. O! sir, experience but too severely proves, that such unequal matches as ours, never produce aught but contempt and anger in parents, censure

from the world, and a long train of sorrow and repentance in the wretched parties ; which is but too often entailed upon their hapless issue.

Eger. But that, Constantia, cannot be our case: my fortune is independent and ample ; equal to luxury and splendid folly. I have a right to choose the partner of my heart.

Con. But I have not, sir : I am a dependent on my lady—a poor, forsaken, helpless orphan ; your benevolent mother found me, took me to her bosom, and there supplied my parental loss, with every tender care, indulgent dalliance—and with all the sweet persuasion that maternal fondness, religious precept, polished manners, and hourly example could administer—she fostered me: [*Weeps.*] and shall I now turn viper, and with black ingratitude sting the tender heart that thus hath cherished me ? shall I seduce her house's heir, and kill her peace ? No ; though I loved to the mad extreme of female fondness ; though every wordly bliss that woman's vanity or man's ambition could desire, followed the indulgence of my love—and all the contempt and misery of this life, the denial of that indulgence—I would discharge my duty to my benefactress—my earthly guardian, my more than parent.

Eger. My dear Constantia, your prudence, your gratitude, and the cruel virtue of your self-denial, do but increase my love, my admiration, and my misery.

Con. Sir, I must beg you will give me leave to return these bills and jewels.

Eger. Pray do not mention them: sure my kindness and esteem may be indulged so far without suspicion or reproach—I beg you will accept of them; nay, I insist.

Con. I have done, sir: my station here is to obey. I know, sir, they are gifts of a virtuous mind; and mine shall convert them to the tenderest and most grateful use.

Eger. Hark! I hear a coach: it is my father. Dear girl, retire and compose yourself. I will send Sidney and my lady to you, and by their judgment we will be directed: will that satisfy you?

Con. I can have no will but my lady's.—With your leave I will retire; I would not see her in this confusion.

Eger. Dear girl, adieu! and think of love, of happiness, and the man who never can be blest without you. [Exit Constantia.]

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir Pertinax and my lady are come, sir, and my lady desires to speak with you in her own room: ---oh! here she is, sir. [Exit.]

Enter Lady MACSYCOPHANT.

Lady Mac. [In great confusion and distress.] Dear child, I am glad to see you: why did you not come to town yesterday, to attend the levee? your father is incensed to the uttermost at your not being there.

Eger. [With great warmth.] Madam, it is with extreme regret I tell you, that I can no longer be a slave

character, I beg you will not be guilty of so rash a step. You promised me you never would marry without my consent.---I will open it to your father. Pray, dear Charles, be ruled : let me prevail.

Sir Per. [*Without, in great anger.*] Sir, wull ye d'ye are bid, and haud your gab, you rascal! You are so full of gab, you scoundrel. Take the chequering, I say, and return to town directly, and see what is become of my lord Lumbercourt.

Lady Mac. Here he comes. I will get out of the way. But, I beg, Charles, while he is in this ill humour, that you will not oppose him, let him say what he will—when his passion is a little cool, I will return and try to bring him to reason : but do not thwart him.

Eger. Madam, I will not. [*Exit Lady Mac.*]

Sir Per. [*Without.*] Here, you Tomlins, where is my son Egerton?

Tom. [*Without.*] In the library, sir.

Sir Per. [*Without.*] As soon as the lawyers come

ye a fine spark? are nat ye a fine spark, I say?---ah! you are a---so you wou'd not come up till the levee?

Eger. Sir, I beg your pardon; but I was not very well; besides, I did not think my presence there was necessary.

Sir Per. [*Snapping him up.*] Sir, it was necessary; I tauld you it was necessary, and, sir, I must now tell you that the whole tenor of your conduct is most offensive.

Eger. I am sorry you think so, sir; I am sure I do not intend to offend you.

Sir Per. I care not what you intend---Sir, I tell you, you do offend. What is the meaning of this conduct, sir? neglect the levee!---'sdeath, sir, you---what is your reason, I say, for thus neglecting the levee, and disobeying my commands?

Eger. [*With a stifled filial resentment.*] Sir, I am not used to levees: nor do I know how to dispose of myself; nor what to say, or do, in such a situation.

Sir Per. [*With a proud, angry resentment.*] Zounds! sir, do you nat see what others do? gentle and simple, temporal and spiritual, lords, members, judges, generals, and bishops; aw crowding, bustling, and pushing foremost intill the middle of the circle, and there waiting, watching, and striving to catch a look or a smile fra the great mon, which they meet, wi' an amicable reesibility of aspect---a modest cadence of body, and a conciliating co-operation of the whole mon; which expresses an officious promptitude for his service, and indicates, that they luock upon themselves

as the suppliant appendages of his power, listed Swiss of his poleetical fortune ; this, you ought to do, and this, sir, is what I omitted for these five and thraty years, let be minister.

Eger. [*Aside.*] Contemptible !

Sir Per. What is that you mutter, sir ?

Eger. Only a slight reflection, sir, not you.

Sir Per. Sir, your absenting yourself fr at this juncture is suspicious ; it is looked kind of disaffection, and aw your coun highly offended at your conduct. For, not look upon you as a friend or a well-w to Scotland or Scotchmen.

Eger. [*With a quick warmth.*] Then, wrong me, I assure you ; but pray, sir, in ticular can I be charged either with coldnes to my country ?

Sir Per. Why, sir, ever since your moti Sir Stanley Egerton, left you this three thous a year, and that you have, in complian will, taken up the name of Egerton, they are grown proud---that you have enstrang fra the Macsycophants---have associated mother's family---with the opposection, and who do not wish well till Scotland : besid other day, in a conversation at dinner at y Campbel M'Kenzie's, before a whole table ain relations, did not you publicly wish

tinguishment of aw party, and of aw national distinctions whatever, relative to the three kingdoms? —[*With great anger.*] And, you blockhead---was that a prudent wish before so many of your ain countrymen?---or was it a filial language to hold before me?

Eger. Sir, with your pardon, I cannot think it un-filial or imprudent. [*With a most patriotic warmth.*] I own I do wish---most ardently wish for a total extinction of all party; particularly that those of English, Irish, and Scotch might never more be brought into contest or competition, unless, like loving brothers, in generous emulation for one common cause.

Sir Per. How, sir! do you persist? What! would you banish aw party, and aw distinction between English, Irish, and your ain countrymen?

Eger. [*With great dignity of spirit.*] I would, sir.

Sir Per. Then damn you, sir, you are nai true Scot. Ay, sir, you may look as angry as you will, but again I say, you are nai true Scot.

Eger. Your pardon, sir, I think he is the true Scot, and the true citizen, who wishes equal justice to the merit and demerit of every subject of Great Britain; amongst whom I know but of two distinctions.

Sir Per. Weel, sir, and what are those---what are those?

Eger. The knave and the honest man.

Sir Per. Pshaw! rideeculbus.

Eger. And he, who makes any other---let him be of the North, or of the South---of the East, or of the

West--in place, or out of place, is an enemy to the whole, and to the virtues of humanity.

Sir Per. Ay, sir, this is your brother's impudent doctrine, for the which I have banished him for ever fra my presence, my heart, and my fortune.---Sir, I will have no son of mine, because truly he has been educated in an English seminary, presume, under the mask of candour, to speak against his native land, or against my principles.

Eger. I never did---nor do I intend it.

Sir Per. Sir, I do not believe you---I do not believe you. But, sir, I know your connections and associates, and I know too, you have a saucy lurking prejudice against your ain country: you hate it; yes, your mother, her family, and your brother, sir, have aw the same, dark, disaffected rankling; and by that and their politics together, they will be the ruin of you---themselves---and of aw who connect with them.---However, nai mair of that now; I will talk at large to you about that anon.---In the mean while, sir, notwithstanding your contempt of my advice, and your disobedience till my commands, I will convince you of my paternal attention till your welfare, by my management of this voluptuary---this Lord Lumbercourt, whose daughter you are to marry. You ken, sir, that the fellow has been my patron above these five and thirty years.

Eger. True, sir.

Sir Per. Vary weel.---And now, sir, you see by his prodigality, he is become my dependent; and ac-

cordingly I have made my bargain with him: the devil a baubee he has in the world but what comes through these clutches; for his whole estate, which has three implecit boroughs upon it---mark---is now in my custody at nurse; the which estate, on my paying off his debts, and allowing him a life rent of five thousand pounds per annum is to be made over till me for my life, and, at my death is to descend till ye and your issue.---The peerage of Lumbercourt, you ken, will follow of course.---So, sir, you see, there are three implecit boroughs, the whole patrimony of Lumbercourt, and a peerage at one slap.---Why, it is a stroke---a hit---a hit.---Zounds! sir, a mon may live a century and not make sic an hit again.

Eger. It is a very advantageous bargain indeed, sir ---but what will my lord's family say to it?

Sir Per. Why, mon, he cares not if his family were aw at the devil, so his luxury is but gratified:---only let him have his race-horse to feed his vanity; his harridan to drink drams with him, scrat his face, and burn his periwig, when she is in her maudlin hysterics ---and three or four discontented patriotic dependents to abuse the ministry, and settle the affairs of the nation, when they are aw intoxicated; and then, sir, the fellow has aw his wishes and aw his wants, in this world and the next.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Lady Rodolpha is come, sir.

Sir Per. And my lord?

D ij

Tom. Not yet, sir; he is about a mile behind, the servants say.

Sir Per. Let me know the instant he arrives.

Tom. I shall, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Sir Per. Step you out, Charles, and receive Lady Rodolpha; and, I desire you will treat her with as much respect and gallantry as possible; for my lord has hinted that you have been very remiss as a lover.—So go, go and receive her.

Eger. I shall, sir.

Sir Per. Vary weel, vary weel;—a guid lad: go, go and receive her as a lover should. [*Exit Egerton.*] Hah! I must keep a devilish tight hand upon this fallow, I see, or he will be touched with the patriotic phrenzy of the times, and run counter till aw my designs. I find he has a strong inclination to have a judgment of his ain, independent of mine, in aw political matters; but as soon as I have finally settled the marriage writings with my lord, I will have a thorough expostulation with my gentleman, I am resolved—and fix him unalterably in his political conduct.—Ah! I am frighted out of my wits, lest his mother's family should seduce him to desert to their party, which would totally ruin my whole scheme, and break my heart.—A fine time of day for a blockhead to turn patriot—when the character is exploded, marked, proscribed? Why, the common people, the vary vulgar, have found out the jest, and laugh at a patriot now-a-days, just as they do at a conjurer, a magician, or any other impostor in society.

Enter TOMLINS, and Lord LUMBERCOURT.

Tom. Lord Lumbercourt. [*Exit.*]

Lord Lum. Sir Pertinax, I kiss your hand.

Sir Per. Your lordship's most devoted.

Lord Lum. Why, you stole a march upon me this morning; gave me the slip, Mac; though I never wanted your assistance more in my life. I thought you would have called on me.

Sir Per. My dear lord, I beg ten millions of pardons for leaving town before you; but you ken that your lordship at dinner yesterday settled it that we should meet this morning at the levee.

Lord Lum. That I acknowledge, Mac.—I did promise to be there, I own.

Sir Per. You did, indeed. And accordingly I was at the levee, and waited there till every soul was gone, and, seeing you did not come, I concluded that your lordship was gone before.

Lord Lum. Why, to confess the truth, my dear Mac, those old sinners, Lord Freakish, General Jolly, Sir Anthony Soaker, and two or three more of that set, laid hold of me last night at the opera; and, as the General says, 'from the intelligence of my head this morning,' I believe we drank pretty deep ere we departed; ha, ha, ha!

Sir Per. Ha, ha, ha! nay, if you were with that party, my lord, I do not wonder at not seeing your lordship at the levee.

Lord Lum. The truth is, Sir Pertinax, my fellow

let me sleep too long for the levee. But I wish I had seen you before you left town; I wanted you dreadfully.

Sir *Per.* I am heartily sorry that I was not in the way:—but on what account did you want me?

Lord *Lum.* Ha, ha, ha! a cursed awkward affair. And, ha, ha, ha! yet I can't help laughing at it neither, though it vexed me confoundedly.

Sir *Per.* Vext you, my lord! Zounds, I wish I had been with you: but, for heaven's sake, my lord, what was it that could possibly vex your lordship?

Lord *Lum.* Why, that impudent, teizing, dunning rascal, Mahogany, my upholsterer.---You know the fellow?

Sir *Per.* Perfectly, my lord.

Lord *Lum.* The impudent scoundrel has sued me up to some damned kind of a—something or other in the law which I think they call an execution.

Sir *Per.* The rascal!

Lord *Lum.* Upon which, sir, the fellow, by way of asking pardon, ha, ha, ha! had the modesty to wait on me two or three days ago, to inform my honour, ha, ha, ha! as he was pleased to dignify me, that the execution was now ready to be put in force against my honour; but that out of respect to my honour, as he had taken a great deal of my honour's money, he would not suffer his lawyer to serve it, till he had first informed my honour, because he was not willing to affront my honour; ha, ha, ha! a son of a whore!

Sir Per. I never heard of so impudent a dog.

Lord Lum. Now my dear Mac, ha, ha, ha ; as the scoundrel's apology was so very satisfactory, and his information so very agreeable, I told him that, in honour, I thought that my honour could not do less than to order his honour to be paid immediately.

Sir Per. Vary weel, vary weel, you were as com-
plaisant as the scoundrel till the full, I think, my lord.

Lord Lum. You shall hear, you shall hear, Mac : so, sir, with great composure, seeing a smart oaken cudgel that stood very handily in a corner of my dressing-room, I ordered two of my fellows to hold the rascal, and another to take the cudgel and return the scoundrel's civility with a good drubbing as long as the stick lasted.

Sir Per. Ha, ha, ha ! admirable ! as guid a stroke of humour as ever I heard of. And did they drub him, my lord ?

Lord Lum. Most liberally, most liberally, sir. And there I thought the affair would have rested, till I should think proper to pay the scoundrel ; but this morning, just as I was stepping into my chaise, my servants all about me, a fellow, called a tipstaff, stepped up, and begged the favour of my footman, who threshed the upholsterer, and of the two that held him, to go along with him upon a little business to my Lord Chief Justice.

Sir Per. The devil !

Lord Lum. And at the same instant, I, in my turn, was accosted by two other very civil scoundrels, who,

with a most insolent politeness, begged my pardon, and informed me that I must not go into my own chaise.

Sir *Per.* How, my lord ! not intill your ain carriage ?

Lord *Lum.* No, sir ; for that they, by order of the sheriff, must seize it, at the suit of a gentleman---one Mr. Mahogany, an upholsterer.

Sir *Per.* An impudent villain !

Lord *Lum.* It is all true, I assure you : so you see, my dear Mac, what a damned country this is to live in, where noblemen are obliged to pay their debts just like merchants, coblers, peasants, or mechanics---is not that a scandal, dear Mac, to the nation ?

Sir *Per.* My lord, it is not only a scandal, but a national grievance.

Lord *Lum.* Sir, there is not another nation in the world has such a grievance to complain of. Now in other countries were a mechanic to dun, and tease, and behave as this Mahogany has done, a nobleman might extinguish the reptile in an instant ; and that only at the expence of a few sequins, florins, or louis d'ors, according to the country where the affair happened.

Sir *Per.* Vary true, my lord, vary true---and it is monstrous that a mon of your lordship's condition is not entitled to run one of these mechanics through the body, when he is impertinent about his money ; but our laws, shamefully, on these occasions, make no distinction of persons amongst us.

Lord *Lum.* A vile policy, indeed, Sir Pertinax---

But, sir, the scoundrel has seized upon the house too, that I furnished for the girl I took from the opera.

Sir Per. I never heard of sic an a scoundrel.

Lord Lum. Ay, but what concerns me most—I am afraid, my dear Mac, that the villain will send down to Newmarket, and seize my string of horses.

Sir Per. Your string of horses? zounds! we must prevent that at all events: that would be sic an a disgrace. I will dispatch an express to town directly, to put a stop till the rascal's proceedings.

Lord Lum. Pr'ythee do, my dear Sir Pertinax.

Sir Per. O! it shall be done, my lord.

Lord Lum. Thou art an honest fellow, Sir Pertinax, upon honour.

Sir Per. O! my lord, it is my duty to oblige your lordship to the utmost stretch of my abeility.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Colonel Topper presents his compliments to you, sir, and having no family down with him in the country, he and Captain Hardbottle, if not inconvenient, will do themselves the honour of taking a family dinner with you.

Sir Per. They are two of our militia officers—does your lordship know them?

Lord Lum. By sight only.

Sir Per. I am afraid, my lord, they will interrupt our business.

Lord Lum. Not at all: I should be glad to be acquainted with Topper; they say he's a damned jolly fellow.

Sir *Per.* O! devilish jolly, devilish joll
the captain are the two hardest drinkers in th

Lord *Lum.* So I have heard; let us hav
all means, Mac; they will enliven the sce
far are they from you?

Sir *Per.* Just across the meadows; not ha
my lord: a step, a step.

Lord *Lum.* O! let us have the jolly do
means.

Sir *Per.* My compliments—I shall be prot
company. [*Exit Tom.*] Guif ye please, my
will gang and chat a bit with the women; I
seen Lady Rodolpha since she returned fra
I long to have a little news from her about
pany there.

Lord *Lum.* O! she'll give you an account
I warrant you. [*A very loud laugh.*]

Lady *Rod.* [*Without.*] Ha, ha, ha! weel I'
sin Egerton, you have a vast deal of shrewd
—But, Lady Macsycophant, which way i
tinax?

Lady *Mac.* [*Without.*] Straight forward, n

Lord *Lum.* Here the hair-brain comes: i
her, by the noise.

Lady *Rod.* [*Without.*] Allons---gude folks
me---*sans cérémonie.*

*Enter Lady RODOLPHA, Lady MACSYCO
EGERTON, and SIDNEY.*

Lady *Rod.* [*Running up to Sir Per.*] Sir!

your most devoted, most obsequious, and most obedient vassal. [*Curtseys very low.*]

Sir Per. [*Bowing ridiculously low.*] Lady Rodolpha, down till the ground, my congratulations and duty attend you; and I should rejoice to kiss your ladyship's footsteps.

Lady Rod. [*Curtysing very low.*] O! Sir Pertinax, your humeclity is most sublimely complaisant;--at present, unanswerable;---but I shall intensely study to return it---fyfty fald.

Sir Per. Your ladyship does me singular honour: weel, madam; ha! you look gaily; weel, and how, how is your ladyship, after your jaunt till the Bath?

Lady Rod. Never better, Sir Pertinax: as weel as youth, health, riotous spirits, and a careless happy heart can make me.

Sir Per. I am mighty glad till hear it, my lady.

Lord Lum. Ay, ay; Rodolpha is always in spirits, Sir Pertinax. *Vive la Bagatelle* is the philosophy of our family---ha? Rodolpha---ha?

Lady Rod. Traith it is, my lord; and upon honour I am determin'd it shall never be changed with my consent. Weel I vow---ha, ha, ha! *Vive la Bagatelle* would be a most brilliant motto for the chariot of a belle of fashion. What say you till my fancy, Lady Macsycophant?

Lady Mac. It would have novelty at least to recommend it, madam.

Lady Rod. Which of aw charms is the most delightful that can accompany wit, taste, love, or friendship;

...for novelty I take to be the true *je ne sçais* of all worldly bliss. Cousin Egerton, should not you to have a wife with *Vive la Bagatelle* upon her wedding chariot?

Eger. O! certainly, madam.

Lady Rod. Yes, I think it would be quite of the common, and singularly elegant.

Eger. Indisputably, madam: for, as a motto-word to the wise, or rather a broad hint to the world of a person's taste and principles---*Vive la Bagatelle* would be most expressive at first sight of ladyship's characteristic.

Lady Rod. [*Curtseys.*] O! Maister Egerton, touch my very heart with your approbation. ha, ha! that is the very spirit of my intention instant I commence bride.---Weel! I am immensely proud that my fancy has the approbation of so sound an understanding, and so polished a taste as that of an all-accomplished [*Curtseys very low.*] Mr. Egerton.

Sir Per. Weel; but, Lady Rodolpha, I want to ask your Ladyship some questions about the coming out at the Bath; they say you had aw the world there.

Lady Rod. O, yes! there was a very great mob indeed; but very little company. Aw Canaille except our ain party. The place was crowded with little purse-proud mechanics; an odd kind of curious-looking animals that have started intill fortune from lottery tickets, rich prizes at sea, gambling in 'Change Alley, and sic like caprices of fortune; and away aw crowd to the Bath to learn genteelity, and

names, titles, intrigues, and bon-mots of us people of fashion ; ha, ha, ha !

Lord *Lum.* Ha, ha, ha ! I know them ; I know the things you mean, my 'dear, extremely well. I have observed them a thousand times, and wondered where the devil they all came from ; ha, ha, ha !

Lady *Mac.* Pray, Lady Rodolpha, what were your diversions at Bath ?

Lady *Rod.* Guid traith, my lady, the company were my diversion ; and better nai human follies ever afforded ; ha, ha, ha ! sic an a mixture, and sic oddities, ha, ha, ha ! a perfect Gallimaufry. Lady Kunegunda M'Kenzie and I used to gang about till every part of this human chaos, on purpose to reconnoitre the monsters and pick up their frivolities ; ha, ha, ha !

Sir *Per.* Ha, ha, ha ! why that must have been a high entertainment till your ladyship.

Lady *Rod.* Superlative and inexhaustible, Sir *Per.* tinax ; ha, ha, ha ! Madam, we had in one group, a peer and a sharper, a dutchess and a pin-maker's wife, a boarding-school miss and her grandmother, a fat parson, a lean general, and a yellow admiral ; ha, ha, ha ! aw speaking together, and bawling and wrangling in fierce contention, as if the fame and fortune of aw the parties were to be the issue of the conflict.

Sir *Per.* Ha, ha, ha ! pray, madam, what was the object of their contention ?

Lady *Rod.* O ! a vary important one, I assure you ; of no less consequence, madam, than how an odd trick at whist was lost, or might have been saved.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Mac. Ridiculous!

Lord Lum. Ha, ha, ha! my dear Rodolpha, I
seen that very conflict a thousand times.

Sir Per. And so have I, upon honour, my lor

Lady Rod. In another party, Sir Pertinax, ha
ha! we had what was called the cabinet-council, v
was composed of a duke and a haberdasher, a re
patriot and a sneering courtier, a discarded state
and his scribbling chaplain, with a busy, bav
muckle-headed, prerogative lawyer; all of whom
every minute ready to gang together by the lugs, :
the in and the out meenistry; ha, ha, ha!

Sir Per. Ha, ha, ha! weel, that is a droll m
cabinet, I vow.—Vary whimsical, upon hono
But they are aw great politicians at Bath, and se
meenistry there with as much ease as they do the
of a country dance.

Lady Rod. Then, Sir Pertinax, in a retired pa
the room—in a bye corner—snug—we h
Jew and a bishop—

Sir Per. A Jew and a bishop!—ha, ha!—a dev
guid connection that;—and pray, my lady, what
they about?

Lady Rod. Why, sir, the bishop was strivin
convert the Jew—while the Jew, by intervals,
sily picking up intelligence fra the bishop, about
change in the meenistry, in hopes of making a st
in the stocks.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Per. Ha, ha, ha! admirable! admirable! I

your the smouse :—hah ! it was develish clever of him, my lord, develish clever.

Lord *Lum.* Yes, yes ; the fellow kept a sharp look-out. I think it was a fair trial of skill on both sides, Mr. Egerton.

Eger. True, my Lord, but the Jew seems to have been in the fairer way to succeed.

Lord *Lum.* O ! all to nothing, sir ; ha, ha, ha !—Well, child, I like your Jew and your bishop much. It's develish clever. Let us have the rest of the history, pray, my dear.

Lady *Rod.* Guid traith, my lord, the sum total is—that there we aw danced, and wrangled, and flattered, and slandered, and gambled, and cheated, and mingled, and jumbled, and wolopped together—clean and unclean—even like the animal assembly in Noah's ark.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha !

Lord *Lum.* Ha, ha, ha !—Well, you are a droll girl, Rodolpha ; and, upon my honour, ha, ha, ha ; you have given us as whimsical a sketch as ever was hit off.

Sir *Per.* Ah ! yes, my lord, especially the animal assembly in Noah's ark. It is an excellent picture of the oddities that one meets with at the Bath.

Lord *Lum.* Why yes, there is some fancy in it, I think, Egerton ?

Eger. Very characteristic indeed, my lord.

Lord *Lum.* What say you, Mr. Sidney ?

Sid. Upon my word, my lord, the lady has made me see the whole assembly in distinct colours.

Lady Rod. O! Maister Sidney, your app
 makes me as vain as a reigning toast before h
 ing-glass.—“ But, Lady Macsycophant, l
 “ help observing, that you have one uncka,
 “ tary fashion here in the South, at your rou
 “ assemblies, and aw your dancing bouts; th
 “ I am astonished you do not relegate fra amc
 “ Lady Mac. Pray, madam, what may tha
 “ Lady Rod. Why, your orgeats, capilla
 “ monades, and aw your slips and slops, wit
 “ you drench your weims, when your are c
 “ Upon honour, they always make a swish-s
 “ my bowels, and give me the wooly-wamble:
 “ Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

“ Lord Lum. Ho, ho, ho! you indelicate c:
 “ —why, my dear Rodolpha, ha, ha, ha! w
 “ you talking about?

“ Lady Rod. Weel, weel, my lord, guin ye
 “ till ye burst, the fact is still true. Now i
 “ burgh, in Edinburgh, my lady, we have
 “ pinch-gut doings; for there, good traith, we
 “ have a guid comfortable dish of cutlets or
 “ or a nice, warm, savory haggiss, with a gu
 “ of whisky-punch to recruit our spirits, af
 “ dancing and sweating.

“ Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

“ Sir Per. Ay, and that is much wholesome
 “ Rodolpha, than aw their slips and their slops
 “ the South.

“ Lord Lum. Ha, ha, ha! Well, my dear

“ pha, you are a droll girl, upon honour, and very
 “ entertaining, I vow; [*He whispers*—but, my dear
 “ child, a little too much upon the dancing, and
 “ sweating, and the wooly-wambles.

“ *Omnos.* Ha, ha, ha!”

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Colonel Toper and Captain Hardbottle are
 come, sir.

Sir Per. O! vary weel. Dinner directly.

Tom. It is ready, sir. [*Exit.*

Sir Per. My lord, we attend your lordship.

Lord Lum. Lady Mac, your ladyship’s hand, if you
 please. [*Exit with Lady Mac.*

Sir Per. And here, Lady Rodolpha, is an Arcadian
 swain that has a hand at your ladyship’s devotion.

Lady Rod. [*Giving her hand to Eger.*] And I, sir,
 have one at his.—There, sir:—as to hearts, ye ken,
 cousin, they are not brought into the account of hu-
 man dealings now-a-days.

Eger. O! madam, they are mere temporary baubles,
 especially in courtship; and no more to be depended
 upon than the weather, or a lottery ticket.

Lady Rod. Ha, ha, ha! twa excellent similies, I
 vow, Mr. Egerton. Excellent! for they illustrate the
 vagaries and inconstancy of my dissipated heart, as
 exactly as if you had meant to describe it.

[*Exit with Eger.*

Sir Per. Ha, ha, ha! what a vast fund of spirits
 and guid humour she has, Maister Sidney!

Sid. A great fund indeed, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Per. Come, let us till dinner.—Hah! by this time to-morrow, Maister Sidney, I hope we shall have every thing ready for you to put the last hand till the happiness of your friend and pupil; and then, sir—my cares will be over for this life :---for as to my other son, I expect nai guid of him, nor should I grieve, were I to see him in his coffin.—But this match—O! it will make me the happiest of all human beings.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Sir PERTINAX and EGERTON.

Sir Pertinax. [*In warm resentment.*]

ZOONS! sir, I will not hear a word about it: I insist upon it you are wrong: you should have paid your court till my lord, and not have scrupled swallowing a bumper or twa, or twenty, till oblige him.

Eger, Sir, I did drink his toast in a bumper.

Sir Per. Yes, you did; but how? how?---just as a bairn takes physic---with aversions and wry faces, which my lord observed: then, to mend the matter, the moment that he and the colonel got into a drunken dispute about religion, you slily slunged away.

Eger. I thought, sir, it was time to go, when my lord insisted upon half pint bumpers.

Sir Per. Sir, that was not levelled at you, but at the colonel, in order to try his bottom; but they aw agree that you and I should drink out of sma glasses.

Eger. But, sir, I beg pardon: I did not choose to drink any more.

Sir Per. But zoons! sir, I tell you, there was a necessity for your drinking more.

Eger. A necessity! in what respect, pray, sir?

Sir Per. Why, sir, I have a certain point to carry, independent of the lawyers, with my lord, in this agreement of your marriage—about which I am afraid we shall have a warm squabble—and therefore I wanted your assistance in it.

Eger. But how, sir, could my drinking contribute to assist you in your squabble?

Sir Per. Yes, sir, it would have contributed—and greatly have contributed to assist me.

Eger. How so, sir?

Sir Per. Nay, sir, it might have prevented the squabble entirely; for as my lord is proud of you for a son-in-law, and is fond of your little French songs, your stories, and your bons mots, when you are in the humour; and guin you had but staid, and been a little jolly, and drank half a score bumpers with him, till he got a little tipsy, I am sure, when we had him in that mood, we might have settled the point as I could wish it, among ourselves, before the lawyers came: but now, sir, I do not ken what will be the consequence.

Eger. But when a man is intoxicated, would that have been a seasonable time to settle business, sir?

Sir Per. The most seasonable, sir: for, sir, when my lord is in his cups, his suspicion is asleep, and his

heart is aw jollity, fun, and guid fellowship ; and can there be a happier moment than that for a gain, or to settle a dispute with a friend ?——Whit you shrug up your shoulders at, sir ?

Eger. At my own ignorance, sir ; for I unders neither the philosophy nor the morality of your trine.

Sir Per. I know you do not, sir ; and, wh worse, you never wull understand it, as you proc—in one word, Charles, I have often told you, now again I tell you, once for aw, that the maves of pliability are as necessary to rise in the w as wrangling and logical subtlety are to rise a bar : why you see, sir, I have acquired a noble tune, a princely fortune—and how do you thi raised it ?

Eger. Doubtless, sir, by your abilities.

Sir Per. Doubtless, sir, you are a blockhead :—sir, I'll tell you how I raised it : Sir, I raised it bowing ; [*Bows ridiculously low.*]—by bowing : s never could stand straight in the presence of a mon, but always bowed, and bowed, and bowed—were by instinct.

Eger. How do you mean by instinct, sir ?

Sir Per. How do I mean by instinct !—Why, s mean by—by—by the instinct of interest, sir, w is the universal instinct of mankind. Sir, it is derful to think, what a cordial, what an amical nay, what an infallible influence bowing has upon pride and vanity of human nature. Charles, an

me sincerely, have you a mind to be convinced of the force of my doctrine, by example and demonstration?

Eger. Certainly, sir.

Sir Per. Then, sir, as the greatest favour I can confer upon you, I'll give you a short sketch of the stages of my bowing, as an excitement, and a landmark for you to bow by, and as an infallible nostrum to rise in the world.

Eger. Sir, I shall be proud to profit by your experience.

Sir Per. Vary weel, sir: sit ye down then, sit you down here: [*They sit down.*—and now, sir, you must recall to your thoughts, that your grandfather was a man, whose penurious income of half-pay was the sum total of his fortune; and, sir, aw my provision fra him was a modicum of Latin, an expertness in arithmetic, and a short system of worldly counsel; the principal ingredients of which were, a persevering industry, a rigid economy, a smooth tongue, a pliability of temper, and a constant attention to make every man well pleased with himself.

Eger. Very prudent advice, sir.

Sir Per. Therefore, sir, I lay it before you.—Now, sir, with these materials, I set out a raw-boned strippling fra the North, to try my fortune with them here in the South; and my first step intill the world was a beggarly clerkship in Sawney Gordon's counting-house, here, in the city of London, which you'll say afforded but a barren sort of a prospect.

Eger. It was not a very fertile one indeed, sir.

Sir Per. The reverse, the reverse: we myself in this unprofitable situation, I rely: I cast about my thoughts morning night, and marked every man and every prosperity; at last I concluded that a marriage venture, prudently conducted, would be what I could gang for the bettering of me and accordingly I set about it: now, sir, suit, beauty! beauty!—ah! beauty often seen, and played about my heart! and flattered, and knocked, and knocked; but entrance I ever let it get; for I observe beauty—is generally—a proud, vain, selfish, impertinent sort of a commodity.

Eger. Very justly observed, sir.

Sir Per. And therefore, sir, I left it to the coxcombs, that could afford to pay for it instead, sir—mark! I looked out for an arthritic, jointured, superannuated dowager; a cat-toothless, ptisicky, wealthy widow; or a cadaverous piece of deformity in the shape of a hazard, or a appersi-and—or, in short, anything that had the siller, the siller—for that is the north star of my affections. Do you think that was nai that right?

Eger. O! doubtless—doubtless, sir.

Sir Per. Now, sir, where do you think I look for this woman with the siller?—nai till the play-houses or assemblies—nai, sir till the kirk, till the anabaptist, independ

nian, and muggle-tonian meetings; till the morning and evening service of churches and chapels of ease, and till the midnight, melting, conciliating love-feasts of the methodists; and there, sir, at last, I fell upon an old, slighted, antiquated, musty maiden, that looked—ha, ha, ha! she looked just like a skeleton in a surgeon's glass case. Now, sir, this miserable object was religiously angry with herself and aw the world; had nai comfort but in metaphysical visions, and supernatural deliriums; ha, ha, ha! Sir, she was as mad—as mad as a Bedlamite.

Eger. Not improbable, sir: there are numbers of poor creatures in the same condition.

Sir *Per.* O! numbers—numbers. Now, sir, this cracked creature used to pray, and sing, and sigh, and groan, and weep, and wail, and gnash her teeth constantly, morning and evening, at the tabernacle in Moorfields: and as soon as I found she had the siller, aha! guid traith, I plumpen me down upon my knees close by her—cheek by jowl—and prayed, and sighed, and sung, and groaned, and gnashed my teeth as vehemently as she could do for the life of her; ay, and turned up the whites of mine een, till the strings awmost cracked again:---I watched her motions, handed her till her chair, waited on her home, got most religiously intimate with her in a week,---married her in a fortnight, buried her in a month;---touched the siller, and with a deep suit of mourning, a melancholy port, a sorrowful visage, and a joyful heart, I began the world again;---and this, sir, was the

first bow, that is, the first effectual bow, I ever made till the vanity of human nature:---now, sir, do you understand this doctrine?

Eger. Perfectly well, sir.

Sir Per. Ay, but was it not right? was it not ingenious, and weel hit off?

Eger. Certainly, sir: extremely well.

Sir Per. My next bow, sir, was till your ain mother, whom I ran away with fra the boarding-school; by the interest of whose family I got a guid smart place in the Treasury:---and; sir, my vary next step was intill Parliament; the which I entered with as ardent and as determined an ambition as ever agitated the heart of Cæsar himself. Sir, I bowed, and watched, and hearkened, and ran about, backwards and forwards; and attended, and dangled upon the then great mon, till I got intill the vary bowels of his confidence,—and then, sir, I wriggled, and wrought, and wriggled, till I wriggled myself among the very thick of them: hah! I got my snack of the clothing, the foraging, the contracts, the lottery tickets, and aw the political bonuses;—till at length, sir, I became a much wealthier man than one half of the golden calves I had been so long a-bowing to: [*He rises, and Egerton rises too*]—and was nai that bowing to some purpose?

Eger. It was indeed, sir.

Sir Per. But are you convinced of the guid effects, and of the utility of bowing.

Eger. Thoroughly, sir.

Sir Per. Sir, it is infallible:—but, Charles, ah!

while I was thus bowing, and wriggling, and raising this princely fortune, ah! I met with many heart-sores and disappointments fra the want of literature, eloquence, and other popular abeleties. Sir, guin I could but have spoken in the house, I should have done the deed in half the time; but the instant I opened my mouth there, they aw fell a-laughing at me;—aw which deficiencies, sir, I determined at any expence, to have supplied by the polished education of a son, who, I hoped, would one day raise the house of Macsycophant till the highest pitch of ministerial ambition. This, sir, is my plan: I have done my part of it; nature has done hers: you are popular, you are eloquent; aw parties like and respect you; and now, sir, it only remains for you to be directed—completion follows.

Eger. Your liberality, sir, in my education, and the judicious choice you made of the worthy gentleman, to whose virtues and abilities you entrusted me, are obligations I shall ever remember with the deepest filial gratitude.

Sir *Per.* Vary weel, sir: but, Charles, have you had any conversation yet with Lady Rodolpha, about the day of your marriage—your liveries—your equipage—or your domestic establishment?

Eger. Not yet, sir.

Sir *Per.* Poh! why there again now you are wrong—vary wrong.

Eger. Sir, we have not had an opportunity.

Sir *Per.* Why, Charles, you are very tardy in this business.

Lord Lum. [*Sings without, flushed with wine.*]
'What have we with day to do?'

Sir Per. O! here comes my lord.

Lord Lum. 'Sons of care, 'twas made for you,'
[*Enters, drinking a dish of coffee: Tomlins waiting with a salver in his hand.*]—'Sons of care, 't was made for you.' Very good coffee indeed, Mr. Tomlins. 'Sons of care, 't was made for you.' Here, Mr. Tomlins.

Tom. Will your lordship please to have another dish?

Lord Lum. No more, Mr. Tomlins. [*Exit Tomlins.*] Ha, ha, ha! my host of the Scotch pints, we have had warm work.

Sir Per. Yes, you pushed the bottle about, my lord, with the joy and vigour of a Bacchanal.

Lord Lum. That I did, my dear Mac; no loss of time with me: I have but three motions, old boy,—charge—toast—fire—and off we go: ha, ha, ha! that's my exercise.

Sir Per. And fine warm exercise it is, my lord,—especially with the half-pint glasses.

Lord Lum. Zounds! it does execution point blanc:—ay, ay, none of your pimping acorn glasses for me, but your manly, old English half-pint bumpers, my dear: they try a fellow's stamina at once: but where's Egerton?

Sir Per. Just at hand, my lord; there he stands—looking at your lordship's picture.

Lord Lum. My dear Egerton.

Eger. Your lordship's most obedient.

Lord Lum. I beg pardon: I did not see you: I am

sorry you left us so soon after dinner: had you staid, you would have been highly entertained. I have made such examples of the commissioner, the captain, and the colonel.

Eger. So I understand, my lord.

Lord Lum. But, Egerton, I have slipped from the company for a few moments, on purpose to have a little chat with you. Rodolpha tells me she fancies there is a kind of demur on your side, about your marriage with her.

Sir Per. A demur! how so, my lord?

Lord Lum. Why, as I was drinking my coffee with the women just now, I desired they would fix the wedding night, and the etiquette of the ceremony; upon which the girl burst into a loud laugh, telling me she supposed I was joking, for that Mr. Egerton had never yet given her a single glance or hint upon the subject.

Sir Per. My lord, I have been just now talking to him about his shyness to the lady.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Counsellor Plausible is come, sir, and Serjeant Eitherside.

Sir Per. Why then we can settle the business this very evening, my lord.

Lord Lum. As well as in seven years: and, to make the way as short as possible, pray, Mr. Tomlins, present your master's compliments and mine to Lady Rodolpha, and let her ladyship know we wish to speak

with her directly: [*Exit Tomlins.*—He shall have her this instant, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Per. Ay! this is doing business effectually, lord.

Lord Lum. O! I will pit them in a moment with Sir Pertinax;—that will bring them into the heat of the action at once, and save a great deal of awkwardness on both sides. O! here your Dulcinea comes.

Enter Lady RODOLPHA, singing, a music box in her hand.

Lady Rod. I have been learning this air of the *Alceste*: I protest, her touch on the harpsichord is brilliant, and really her voice not amiss. Well, Sir Pertinax, I attend your commands, and yours, my dear lord. [*Lady Rodolpha curtsies very low, and answers in the same manner.*]

Lord Lum. Why, then, my filial lady, we are to inform you that the commission for your lady's hand to this enamoured cavalier, commanding you to leave your country, jointly and inseparably, in the vain and forlorn hope of matrimony, is to be signed this very evening.

Lady Rod. This evening, my lord!

Lord Lum. This evening, my lady. Come, Sir Pertinax, let us leave them to settle their liveries, their riding-suits, carriages, and all their amorous preparations for the nuptial campaign.

Sir Per. Ha, ha, ha! excellent! excellent!

vow, my lord, you are a great officer :—this is as guid a manœuvre to bring on a rapid engagement as the ablest general of them aw could have started.

Lord Lum. Ay, ay! leave them together; they'll soon come to a right understanding, I warrant you, for the needle and loadstone have lost their sympathy.

[*Exeunt Lord Lum. and Sir Per.*]

Lady Rodolpha stands at the side of the Stage, where they went off, in amazement: Egerton is at the opposite side, who, after some anxious emotion, settles into a deep reflexion:—this part of the scene must be managed by a nice whispering tone of self conversation, mutually observed by the Lovers.]

Lady Rod. [*Aside.*] Why, this is downright tyranny! it has quite damped my spirits; and my betrothed, wonder, seems planet-struck too, I think.

Eger. [*Aside.*] A whimsical situation, mine!

Lady Rod. [*Aside.*] Ha, ha, ha! methinks we look like a couple of cautious generals, that are obliged to make the field, but neither of us seems willing to come till action.

Eger. [*Aside.*] I protest, I know not how to address her.

Lady Rod. [*Aside.*] He will nai advance, I see: what am I to do in this affair? guid traith, I will even do, as I suppose many brave heroes have done before me—clap a guid face upon the matter, and so conceal an aching heart under a swaggering countenance. [*As she advances, she points at him, and smoo-*

rassed deliberation of your perturbed spirits.

Eger. [*Greatly embarrassed.*] Madam, I beg pardon. [*Hands her a chair, then one for him* Please to sit, madam. [*They sit down with great* mony: she sits down first. He sits at a distance from They are silent for some time. He coughs, hems, and justs himself. She mimicks him.]

Lady Rod. [*Aside.*] Aha! he's resolved not to come too near till me, I think.

Eger. [*Aside.*] A pleasant interview, this—hem!

Lady Rod. [*Aside, mimicks him to herself.*] He will not open the congress, I see.—Then I will [*Very loud.*] Come, sir, when will you begin?

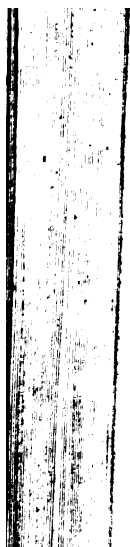
Eger. [*Greatly surprised.*] Begin! what, madam?

Lady Rod. To make love till me.

Eger. Love, madam!

Lady Rod. Ay, love, sir. Why, you have said a word till me on the subject, nor cast a





ministering some of the preliminaries usual on those occasions: if not till my understanding and sentiments, yet till the vanity of my sex, at least, I hope you will pay some little tribute of ceremony and adulation: that, I think, I have a right to expect.

Eger. Madam, I own your reproach is just:—I shall, therefore, no longer disguise my sentiments, but fairly let you know my heart.

Lady Rod. [*Starts up and runs to him.*] That's right, that is right, cousin; honourably and affectionately right; that is what I like of aw things in my swain. Ay, ay, cousin, open your mind frankly till me, as a true lover should.—But sit you down, sit you down again: I shall return your frankness and your passion, cousin, with a melting tenderness, equal till the amorous enthusiasm of an ancient heroine.

Eger. Madam, if you will hear me——

Lady Rod. But remember, you must begin with fervency, and a most rapturous vehemency: for you are to consider, cousin, that our match is nai to arise fra the union of hearts, and a long decorum of ceremonious courtship; but is instantly to start at once, out of necessity, or mere accident;—ha, ha, ha! like a match in an ancient romance, where you ken, cousin, the knight and the damsel are mutually smitten and dying for each other at first sight—or by an amorous sympathy before they exchange a single glance.

Eger. Dear madam, you entirely mistake——

Lady Rod. And our fathers—ha, ha, ha! our fathers are to be the dark magicians that are to fascinate

our hearts, and conjure us together, whether we will or not.

Eger. Ridiculous!

Lady Rod. So now, cousin, with the true romantic enthusiasm, you are to suppose me the lady of the enchanted castle; and you—ha, ha, ha! you are to be the knight of the sorrowful countenance—ha, ha, ha! and, upon honour—you look the character admirably—ha, ha, ha!

Eger. Rude trifling creature!

Lady Rod. Come, sir, why do you not begin to ravish me with your valour, your vows, your knight-errantry, and your amorous phrenzy?—Nay, nay, nay! guin you do not begin at once, the lady of the enchanted castle will vanish in a twinkling.

Eger. Lady Rodolpha, I know your talent for rail-lery well; but at present, in my case, there is a kind of cruelty in it.

Lady Rod. Raillery! upon honour, cousin, you mistake me quite and clean. I am serious—very serious; ay, and I have cause to be serious; nay, I will submit my case even till yourself. [*Whines.*]—Can any poor lassie be in a more lamentable condition, than to be sent four hundred miles, by the command of a positive grandmother, to marry a man, who, I find, has no more affection for me than if I had been his wife these seven years?

Eger. Madam, I am extremely sorry——

Lady Rod. [*Cries and sobs.*] But it is vary weel, cousin.—I see your unkindness and aversion plain

enough; and, sir, I must tell you fairly, you are the ainly man that ever slighted my person, or that drew tears fra these een.—But—it is vary weel—it's vary weel; I will return till Scotland to-morrow morning, and let my grandmother know how I have been affronted by your slights, your contempts, and your aversions.

Eger. If you are serious, madam, your distress gives me a deep concern; but affection is not in our power; and when you know my heart is irrecoverably given to another woman, I think your understanding and good nature will not only pardon my past coldness and neglect of you, but forgive me when I tell you, I never can have that honour which is intended me, by a connection with your ladyship.

Lady Rod. [*Starting up.*] How, sir, are you serious?

Eger. [*Rises.*] Madam, I am too deeply interested, both as a man of honour and a lover, to act otherwise with you on so tender a subject.

Lady Rod. And so you persist in slighting me?

Eger. I beg your pardon, madam: but I must be explicit, and at once declare—that I never can give my hand where I cannot give my heart.

Lady Rod. [*In great anger.*] Why then, sir, I must tell you, that your declaration is sic an affront as nai woman of spirit can, or ought to bear:—and here I make a solemn vow, never to pardon it, but on one condition.

Eger. If that condition be in my power, madam—

Lady Rod. [*Snaps him up.*] Sir, it is in your power to command me.

Lady Rod. [*With a firm and peremptory command.*] Why then, sir, the condition is this :—you must give me your honour, that not importunity, command, or menace of your father—in fine, the consideration whatever, shall induce you to take Rodolpha Lumbercourt, to be your wedded wife.

Eger. Madam, I most solemnly promise I will.

Lady Rod. And I, sir, most solemnly and sincerely [*Curtseys.*] thank you for [*Curtseys.*] your resolution and your agreeable aversion---ha, ha, ha! for you have made me as happy as a poor wretch reprieved at the very instant of intended execution.

Eger. Pray, madam, how am I to understand this?

Lady Rod. [*With frankness, and a reverse of her former manner.*] Why, sir, your frankness and sincerity demands the same behaviour on my side; therefore, without farther disguise or ambiguity, know, sir, that I myself [*With a deep sigh.*] am as deeply smitten with a certain swain as I understand you are with Constantia.

Eger. Indeed, madam!

Lady Rod. [*With an amiable, soft, tender sincerity.*] O! sir, notwithstanding all my show of courage and mirth—here I stand, as errant a trembling virgin as ever sighed or mourned for her Pyramus : and, sir, my extravagant levity and ridiculous behavior

your presence now, and ever since your father prevailed upon mine to consent till this match, has been a premeditated scheme to provoke your gravity and guid sense intill a cordial disgust and a positive refusal.

Eger. Madam, you have contrived and executed your scheme most happily.

Lady Rod. Then, since Cupid has thus luckily disposed of you till your Constantia, and me till my swain, we have nothing to think of now, sir, but to contrive how to reduce the inordinate passions of our parents intill a temper of prudence and humanity.

Eger. Most willingly I consent to your proposal.—But, with your leave, madam, if I may presume so far—pray, who is your lover?

Lady Rod. Why, in that too I shall surprize you, perhaps, more than ever.—In the first place—he is a beggar—and in disgrace with an unforgiving father—and in the next place, he is [*Curtsies*] your ain brother.

Eger. Is it possible?

Lady Rod. A most amorous truth, sir; that is, as far as a woman can answer for her ain heart. [*In a laughing gaiety.*] So you see, cousin Charles, thof I could nai mingle affections with you—I have nai ganged out of the family.

Eger. [*A polite rapture, frank.*] Madam, give me leave to congratulate myself upon your affection; you could not have placed it on a worthier object; and whatever is to be our chance in this lottery of our pa-

rents, be assured that my fortune shall be devoted to your happiness and his.

Lady Rod. Generous indeed, cousin—but not a whit nobler, I assure you, than your brother Sandy believes of you. And be assured, sir, that we shall both remember it, while the heart feels, or the memory retains a sense of gratitude.—But now, sir, let me ask one question:—Pray, how is your mother affected in this business?

Eger. She knows of my passion, and will, I am sure, be a friend to the common cause.

Lady Rod. Ah! that's lucky. Our first step then must be to take her advice upon our conduct, so as to keep our fathers in the dark, till we can hit of some measure that will wind them about till our ain purpose, and the common interest of our ain passion.

Eger. You are very right, madam; for, should my father suspect my brother's affection for your ladyship, or mine for Constantia, there is no guessing what would be the consequence.—His whole happiness depends upon this bargain with my lord; for it gives him the possession of three boroughs, and those, madam, are much dearer to him than the happiness of his children. I am sorry to say it—but, to gratify his political rage, he would sacrifice every social tie that is dear to friend or family.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Sir PERTINAX, *and* Counsellor PLAUSIBLE.

Sir Pertinax.

No, no.—Come away, Counsellor Plausible ;—come away, I say ; let them chew upon it. Why, counsellor, did you ever see so impertinent, so meddling, and so obstinate a blocked as that Serjeant Eitherside ? Confound the fellow, he has put me out of aw temper.

Plaus. He is very positive, indeed, Sir Pertinax—and no doubt was intemperate and rude. But, Sir Pertinax, I would not break off the match notwithstanding ; for certainly, even without the boroughs, it is an advantageous bargain both to you and your son.

Sir Per. But, zounds ! Plausible, do you think I will give up the nomination till three boroughs ? Why, I would rather give him twenty, nay thirty thousand pounds in any other part of the bargain ; especially at this juncture, when votes are likely to become so valuable.—Why, mon, if a certain affair comes on, they will rise above five hundred per cent.

Plaus. You judge very rightly, Sir Pertinax ; but what shall we do in this case ? for Mr. Serjeant insists that you positively agreed to my lord's having the nomination to the three boroughs during his own life.

Sir Per. Why, yes—in the first sketch of the agreement, I believe I did consent :---but at that time, man,

my lord's affairs did not appear to be half so despicable as I now find they turn out.---Sir, he must acquiesce in whatever I demand, for I have got him intill such a hobble that he cannot-----

Plaus. No doubt, Sir Pertinax, you have him completely in your power.

Sir Per. Vary weel: And ought na a mon to take his vantage of it?

Plaus. No doubt you ought; no manner of doubt. But, Sir Pertinax, there is a secret spring in this business that you do not seem to perceive; and which I am afraid, governs the matter respecting these boroughs.

Sir Per. What spring do you mean, counsellor?

Plaus. Why, this Serjeant Eitherside. I have good reason to think that my lord is tied down by some means or other to bring the serjeant in, the very vacancy, for one of these boroughs:—now that, I believe, is the sole motive why the serjeant is so stout that my lord should keep the boroughs in his power; fearing that you might reject him for a man of your own.

Sir Per. Odswunds and death! Plausible, you are clever, develish clever. By the blood, you have upon the very string that has made aw this discovery. Oh! I see it, I see it now. But hauld—hauld—a wee bit—a wee bit, mon; I have a thought intill my head—yes—I think, Plausible, that with a twist in our negociation, that this very string, properly tuned, may be still made to produce the

harmony we wish for. Yes, yes! I have it: this serjeant, I see, understands business—and, If I am not mistaken, knows how to take a hint.

Plaus. O! nobody better, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Per. Why then, Plausible, the short road is always the best with sic a mon.—You must even come up till his mark at once, and assure him from me, that I will secure him a seat for one of these vary borroughs.

Plaus. O! that will do, Sir Pertinax—that will do, I'll answer for 't.

Sir Per. And further—I beg you will let him know that I think myself obliged to consider him in this affair, as acting for me as weel as for my lord, as a common friend till baith:---and for the services he has already done us, make my special compliments til him---and pray let this amicable bit of paper be my faithful advocate to convince him of what my gratitude further intends for his great [*Gives him a bank-bill.*] equity in adjusting this agreement betwixt my lord and me.

Plaus. Ha, ha, ha!—upon my word, Sir Pertinax, this is noble.---Ay, ay! this is an eloquent bit of paper indeed.

Sir Per. Maister Plausible, in aw human dealings the most effectual method is that of ganging at once till the vary bottom of a man's heart:---for if we expect that men should serve us, we must first win their affections by serving them. O! here they baith come.

Enter Lord LUMBERCOURT and Serjeant EITHERS

Lord *Lum.* My dear Sir Pertinax, what could voke you to break off this business so abruptly? are really wrong in the point—and if you will yourself time to recollect, you will find that my ing the nomination to the boroughs for my life v preliminary article; I appeal to Mr. Serjeant Ei side here, whether I did not always understand i

Serj. I assure you, Sir Pertinax, that in al lordship's conversation with me upon this busi and in his positive instructions---both he and I al understood the nomination to be in my lord, *du vitâ.*

Sir *Per.* Why then, my lord, to shorten the pute, aw that I can say in answer to your lordshi that there has been a total mistake betwixt us in point, and therefore the treaty must end here. I it up. O! I wash my hands of it for ever.

Plaus. Well, but, gentlemen, gentlemen, a patience. Sure this mistake, some how or other, be rectified.---Pr'ythee, Mr. Serjeant, let you a step into the next room by ourselves, and reconside clause relative to the boroughs, and try if we ca hit upon a medium that will be agreeable to both ties.

Serj. [*With great warmth.*] Mr. Plausible, I considered the clause fully; am entirely master of question; my lord cannot give up the point. unkind and unreasonable to expect it.

Plaus. Nay, Mr. Serjeant, I beg you will not misunderstand me. Do not think I want his lordship to give up any point without an equivalent. Sir Pertinax, will you permit Mr. Serjeant and me to retire a few moments to reconsider this point?

Sir Per. With aw my heart, Maister Plausible; any thing to oblige his lordship---any thing to accommodate his lordship---any thing.

Plaus. What say you, my lord?

Lord Lum. Nay, I submit it entirely to you and Mr. Serjeant.

Plaus. Come, Mr. Serjeant, let us retire.

Lord Lum. Ay, ay---go, Mr. Serjeant, and hear what Mr. Plausible has to say.

Serj. Nai, I'll wait on Mr. Plausible, my lord, with all my heart; but I am sure I cannot suggest the shadow of a reason for altering my present opinion: impossible---impossible.

Plaus. Well, well, Mr. Serjeant, do not be positive. I am sure, reason, and your client's convenience, will always make you alter your opinion.

Serj. Ay, ay---reason, and my client's convenience, Mr. Plausible, will always control my opinion, depend upon it: ay, ay! there you are right. Sir, I attend you. [Exeunt Lawyers.]

Sir Per. I am sorry, my lord, extremely sorry indeed, that this mistake has happened.

Lord Lum. Upon my honour, and so am I, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Per. But come now, after aw, your lordship must

allow you have been in the wrong: come, my dear lord, you must allow me that now.

Lord *Lum.* How so, my dear Sir Pertinax?

Sir *Per.* Not about the boroughs, my lord, for those I do not mind of a bawbee;—but about your distrust of my friendship.—Why, do you think now—I appeal till your ain breast, my lord—do you think, I say, that I should ever have slighted your lordship's nomination till these boroughs?

Lord *Lum.* Why, really, I do not think you would, Sir Pertinax: but one must be directed by one's lawyer, you know.

Sir *Per.* Hah! my lord, lawyers are a dangerous species of animals to have any dependance upon: they are always starting punctilios and difficulties among friends. Why, my dear lord, it is their interest that aw mankind should be at variance; for disagreement is the vary manure with which they enrich and fatten the land of litigation; and as they find that constantly promotes the best crop, depend upon it, they will always be sure to lay it on as thick as they can.

Lord *Lum.* Come, come, my dear Sir Pertinax, you must not be angry with the serjeant for his insisting so warmly on this point—for those boroughs, you know, are my sheet anchor.

Sir *Peg.* I know it, my lord—and, as an instance of my promptness to study, and of my acquiescence till your lordship's inclination, as I see that this Serjeant Eitherside wishes you weel, and you him, I think now he would be as guid a man to be returned for one

of those boroughs as could be pitched upon—and as such, I humbly recommend him till your lordship's consideration.

Lord *Lum.* Why, my dear Sir Pertinax, to tell you the truth, I have already promised him. He must be in for one of them, and that is one reason why I insisted so strenuously: he must be in.

Sir *Per.* And why not? odswunds! why not? is nai your word a fiat? and will it nai be always so till me; are ye nai my friend—my patron—and are we nai, by this match of our children, to be united intill one interest?

Lord *Lum.* So I understand it, I own, Sir Pertinax.

Sir *Per.* My lord, it can nai be otherwise: then, for Heaven's sake, as your lordship and I can have but one interest for the future, let us have nai mair words about these paltry boroughs, but conclude the agreement just as it stands: otherwise there must be new writings drawn, new consultations of lawyers; new objections and delays will arise; creditors will be impatient and impertinent, so that we shall nai finish the Lord knows when.

Lord *Lum.* You are right, you are right: say no more, Mac, say no more. Split the lawyers—you judge the point better than all Westminster Hall could. It shall stand as it is: yes, you shall settle it your own way; for your interest and mine are the same, I see plainly.

Sir *Per.* No doubt of it, my lord.

Lord *Lum.* O! here the lawyers come.

Enter Counsellor PLAUSIBLE, *and* Serjeant EITHERSIDE.

Lord Lum. So, gentlemen—well, what have you done? how are your opinions now?

Serj. My lord, Mr. Plausible has convinced me—fully convinced me.

Plaus. Yes, my lord, I have convinced him; I have laid such arguments before Mr. Serjeant as were irresistible.

Serj. He has indeed, my lord: besides, as Sir Pertinax gives his honour that your lordship's nomination shall be sacredly observed, why, upon a nearer review of the whole matter, I think it will be the wiser measure to conclude the agreement just as it is drawn.

Lord Lum. I am very glad you think so, Mr. Serjeant, because that is my opinion too: so, my dear Eitherside, do you and Plausible dispatch the business now as soon as possible.

Serj. My lord, every thing will be ready in less than an hour. Come, Mr. Plausible, let us go and fill up the blanks, and put the last hand to the writings on our part.

Plaus. I attend you, Mr. Serjeant. [*Exeunt Lawyers.*]

Lord Lum. And while the lawyers are preparing the writings, Sir Pertinax, I will go and saunter with the women.

Sir Per. Do, do, my lord: and I will come till you presently.

Lord Lum. Very well, my dear Mac, I shall expect you.

[*Exit singing, 'Sons of care,' &c.*]

Sir Per. So! a little flattery mixt with the finesse of gilded promise on one side, and a quantum sufficit the aurum palpabile on the other, have at last made me the happiest father in Great-Britain. Hah! my art expands itself, as it were, through every part of my whole body, at the completion of this business, and feels nothing but dignity and elevation.—Hauld! Hauld! bide a wee! bide a wee! I have but one little utter mair in this affair to adjust; and then, *Sir Martin*, you may dictate till Fortune herself, and bid her to govern fools, while you show and convince the world that wise men always govern her. Wha's ere? [*Enter Footman.*] Tell my son Egerton, I would speak with him here in the library. [*Exit Footman.*] Now I have settled the grand point with my mind, this, I think, is the proper juncture to feel the political pulse of my spark, and, once for aw, to set to the exact measure that I would have it constantly at.

Enter EGERTON.

Come hither, Charles.

Eger. Your pleasure, sir.

Sir Per. About twa hours since I told you, Charles, that I received this letter express, complaining of your brother's activity at an election in Scotland against a particular friend of mine, which has given great offence; and, sir, you are mentioned in the letter as well as he: to be plain, I must roundly tell you, that this interview depends my happiness as a father

and as a man ; and my affection to you, sir, as :
for the remainder of our days.

Eger. I hope, sir, I shall never do any thing
to forfeit your affection, or disturb your happiness.

Sir Per. I hope so too: but to the point. This
is this: there has been a motion made this very day
to bring on the grand affair, which is settled for Friday
evening:—now, sir, as you are popular, ha-
ble, and are well heard, it is expected, and I
trust upon it, that you endeavour to atone, sir, for
late misconduct, by preparing, and taking a
share in that question, and supporting it with au-
thority.

Eger. Sir, I have always divided as you direct
except on one occasion; never voted against
friends, only in that affair.—But, sir, I hope you
will not so exert your influence, as to insist upon my
supporting a measure by an obvious, prostituted so-
lly, in direct opposition to my character and my
science.

Sir Per. Conscience! why, you are mad! did
you ever hear any man talk of conscience in political
matters? Conscience, quotha? I have been in parlia-
ment these three and thirty years, and never heard
the term made use of before:—sir, it is an unparlia-
mentary word, and you will be laughed at for it; there-
fore I desire you will not offer to impose upon me with
phantoms, but let me know your reason for thus sli-
ng my friends and disobeying my commands.—
give me an immediate and an explicit answer.

Eger. Then, sir, I must frankly tell you, that you work against my nature ; you would connect me with men I despise, and press me into measures I abhor ; would make me a devoted slave to selfish leaders, who have no friendship but in faction—no merit but in corruption—nor interest in any measure but their own ;—and to such men I cannot submit ; for know, sir, that the malignant ferment which the venal ambition of the times provokes in the heads and hearts of other men, I detest.

Sir Per. What are you about, sir ? malignant ferment ! and venal ambition ! Sir, every man should be ambitious to serve his country—and every man should be rewarded for it : and pray, sir, would not you wish to serve your country ? Answer me that.—I say, would not you wish to serve your country ?

Eger. Only show me how I can serve my country, and my life is hers. Were I qualified to lead her armies, to steer her fleets, and deal her honest vengeance on her insulting foes ;—or could my eloquence pull down a state leviathan, mighty by the plunder of his country, black with the treasons of her disgrace, and send his infamy down to a free posterity, as a monumental terror to corrupt ambition, I would be foremost in such service, and act it with the unremitting ardour of a Roman spirit.

Sir Per. Vary weel, sir ! vary weel ! the fellow is beside himself !

Eger. But to be a common barker at envied power—to beat the drum of faction, and sound the trumpet of

insidious patriotism, only to displace a rival—or to a servile voter in proud corruption's filthy train market out my voice, my reason, and my trust, to a party-broker who best can promise or pay for protection; these, sir, are services my nature abhors, for they are such a malady to every kind of virtue that must in time destroy the fairest constitution that wisdom framed, or virtuous liberty fought for.

Sir Per. Why, are you mad, sir? you have certainly been bit by some mad whig or other: but sir, after this foul-mouthed phrenzy, and that vulgar intemperance, suppose we were to ask you a plain question or two: Pray, what single instance of you, or any man, give of the political vice or corruption of these days, that has not been practised in the greater states, and in the most virtuous times? I challenge you to give me a single instance.

Eger. Your pardon, sir—it is a subject I will decline: you know, sir, we never can agree about this.

Sir Per. Sir, I insist upon an answer.

Eger. I beg you will excuse me, sir.

Sir Per. I will not excuse you, sir.—I insist.

Eger. Then sir, in obedience, and with your permission, I will answer your question.

Sir Per. Ay! ay! I will be patient, never come, let us have it, let us have it.

Eger. You shall; and now, sir, let prejudice and rage of party, and the habitual insolence of success—vice—pause but for one moment—and let religion, laws, power herself, the policy of a nation's virtue

Britain's guardian genius, take a short, impartial retrospect but of one transaction, notorious in this land ---then must they behold yeomen, freemen, citizens, artizans, divines, courtiers, patriots, merchants, soldiers, sailors, and the whole plebeian tribe, in septennial procession, urged and seduced by the contending great ones of the land to the altar of perjury---with the bribe in one hand, and the evangelist in the other ---impiously and audaciously affront the Majesty of Heaven, by calling him to witness that they have not received, nor ever will receive, reward or consideration for his suffrage.—Is not this a fact, sir? Can it be denied? Can it be believed by those who know not Britain? Or can it be matched in the records of human policy?---Who then, sir, that reflects one moment, as a Briton or a Christian, on this picture, would be conducive to a people's infamy and a nation's ruin?

Sir *Per.* Sir, I have heard your rhapsody with a great deal of patience, and great astonishment—and you are certainly beside yourself. What the devil business have you to trouble your head about the sins or the souls of other men? You should leave this matter till the clergy, who are paid for looking after them; and let every man gang to the devil his ain way: besides, it is nae decent to find fault with what is winked at by the whole nation—nay, and practised by aw parties.

Eger. That, sir, is the very shame, the ruin I complain of.

Sir *Per.* Oh! you are vary young, vary young in these matters; but experience will convince you, sir,

that every man in public business has twa consciences—a religious and a political conscience. Why you see a merchant now, or a shop-keeper, that keeps his shop in the science of the world, always looks upon an oath as a custom-house, or behind a counter, only as an article of business, a thing of course, a mere thing of course that has nothing to do with religion ;—and just as he does at an election :—for instance now—I am a candidate, you may pray observe, and I gang till a periwig-maker, a shoemaker, or a hosier, and I give ten, twenty, or thirty shillings for a periwig, a hat, or a pair of hose ; and I get a majority through a majority of voters ;—vary weel ;—what is the consequence ? Why, this commercial intercourse, you see, begets a friendship betwixt us, a commercial friendship—and in a day or twa these men gang till and give me their sufferages ; weel ! what is the inference ? Pray, sir, can you, or any lawyer, divine, or guess, I caw this a bribe ? Nai, sir, in fair political reasoning, it is ainly generosity on the one side, and gratitude on the other. So, sir, let me have nai mare of your religious or philosophical refinements, but prepare to attend, and speak till the question, or you are out of mine. Sir, I insist upon it.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir, my lord says the writings are now ready, and his lordship and the lawyers are waiting for you, and Mr. Egerton.

Sir Per. Vary weel : we'll attend his lordship
[*Exit Sam.*] I tell you, Charles, aw this consci-

refinement in politics is downright ignorance, and impracticable romance; and, sir, I desire to hear no more of it. Come, sir, let us gang down and finish this business.

Eger. [*Stopping Sir Per. as he is going off.*] Sir, with your permission, I beg you will first hear a word or two upon this subject.

Sir Per. Weel, sir, what would you say?

Eger. I have often resolved to let you know my aversion to this match——

Sir Per. How, sir!

Eger. But my respect, and fear of disobliging you, have hitherto kept me silent——

Sir Per. Your aversion! your aversion, sir! how dare you use sic language till me? Your aversion! Look you, sir, I shall cut the matter very short:--- consider, my fortune is nai inheritance; aw mine ain acquisition: I can make ducks and drakes of it; so do not provoke me, but sign the articles directly.

Eger. I beg your pardon, sir, but I must be free on this occasion, and tell you at once, that I can no longer dissemble the honest passion that fills my heart for another woman.

Sir Per. How! another woman! and, you villain, how dare you love another womant without my leave? But what other woman---wha is she? Speak, sir, speak.

Eger. Constantia.

Sir Per. Constantia! oh, you profligate! what! a creature taken in for charity!

Eger. Her poverty is not her crime, sir, but her misfortune: her birth is equal to the noblest; her virtue, though covered with a village garb, is still; and of more worth to me than all the splendor of ermined pride or redundant wealth. There, sir—

Sir Per. Haud your jabbering, you villain, by your jabbering; none of your romance or refinement till me. I have but one question to ask you---but one question---and then I have done with you for ever for ever; therefore think before you answer:---Will you marry the lady, or will you break my heart?

Eger. Sir, my presence shall not offend you no longer: but when reason and reflection take the turn, I am sure you will not be pleased with yourself for this unpaternal passion. [Goes]

Sir Per. Tarry, I command you; and, I command you likewise not to stir till you have given me an answer, a definitive answer: Will you marry the lady or will you not?

Eger. Since you command me, sir, know then, that I cannot, will not marry her. [Exit]

Sir Per. Oh! the villain has shot me through the head! he has cut my vitals! I shall run distracted! the fellow destroys aw my measures---aw my schemes---there never was sic a bargain as I have made with this foolish lord:---possession of his whole estate, with three boroughs upon it---six members.---Why, what an acquisition! what consequence! what dignity! what weight till the house of Macsycophant! O! damn

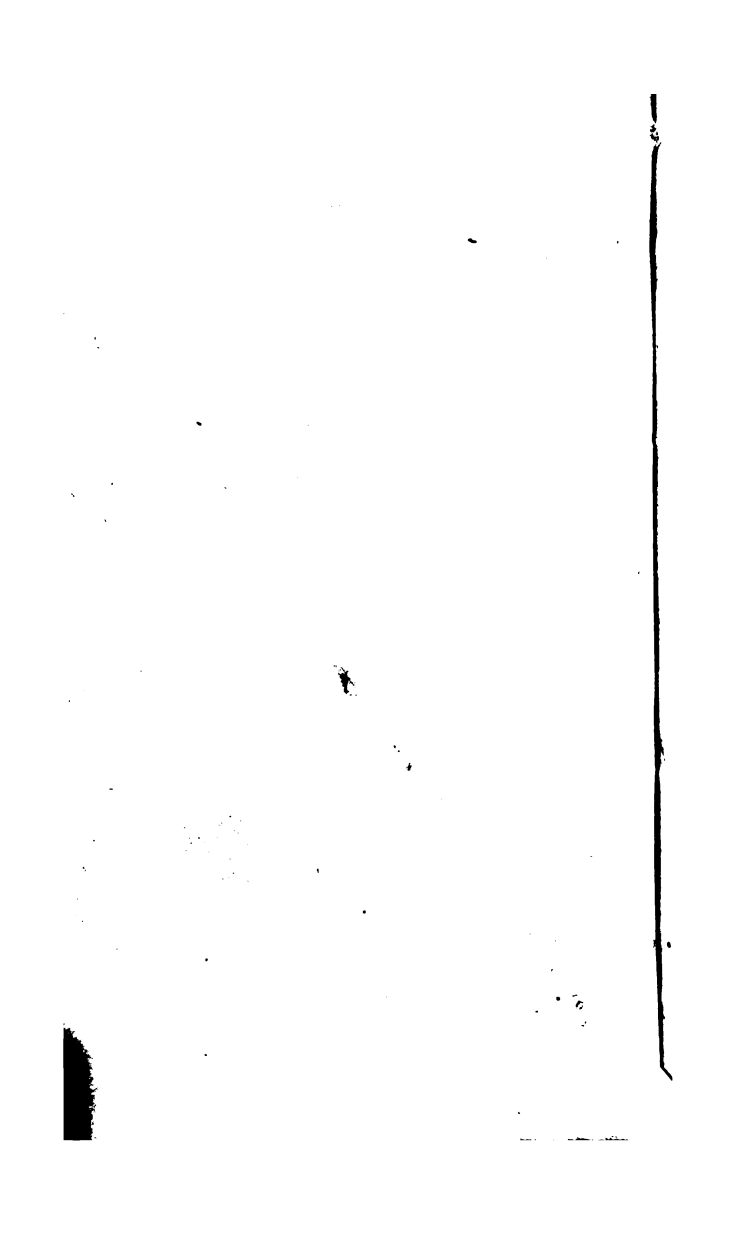
THE MAN of the WORLD.



Painted

MACKLIN as SIR PERTINAX MACGYVER

Mr Per Haud your jabbering you Villain,
haud your jabbering.



the fellow ! three boroughs, only for sending down six broom-sticks.---O ! miserable ! miserable ! ruined ! undone ! For these five and twanty years, ever since this fellow came intill the world, have I been secretly preparing him for ministerial dignity---and with the fellow's eloquence, abilities, popularity, these boroughs, and proper connexions, he might certainly, in a little time, have done the deed ; and sure never were times so favourable, every thing conspires, for aw the auld political post-horses are broken-winded and foundered, and cannot get on ; and as till the rising generation, the vanity of surpassing one another in what they foolishly call taste and elegance, binds them hand and foot in the chains of luxury, which will always set them up till the best bidder ; so that if they can but get wherewithal to supply their dissipation, a minister may convert the political morals of aw sic voluptuaries intill a vote that would sell the nation till Prester John, and their boasted liberties till the great Mogul :---and this opportunity I shall lose by my son's marrying a vartuous beggar for love :---O ! confound her vartue ! it will drive me distracted.

[Exit.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Sir PERTINAX, and BETTY HINT.

Sir Pertinax.

COME this way, Betty---come this way :---you are a guid girl, and I will reward you for this discovery.---O the villain ! offer her marriage !

Betty. It is true, indeed, sir;---I would not tell your honour a lye for the world; but in troth it lay upon my conscience, and I thought it my duty to tell your worship.

Sir Per. You are right—you are right;—it was your duty to tell me, and I'll reward you for it. But you say Maister Sidney is in love with her too.—Pray how came you by that intelligence?

Betty. O! sir, I know when folks are in love, let them strive to hide it as much as they will.—I know it by Mr. Sidney's eyes, when I see him stealing a sly side-look at her—by his trembling—his breathing short—his sighing when they are reading together. Besides, sir, he has made love-verses upon her in praise of her virtue, and her playing upon music.—Ay! and I suspect another thing, sir—she has a sweetheart, if not a husband, not far from hence.

Sir Per. Wha! Constantia?

Betty. Ay, Constantia, sir.---Lord! I can know the whole affair, sir, only for sending over to Hadley, to farmer Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir Per. Then send this instant; and get me a particular account of it.

Betty. That I will, sir.

Sir Per. In the mean time, keep a strict watch upon Constantia---and be sure to bring me word of whatever new matter you can pick up about her, my son, or this Hadley husband or sweetheart.

Betty. Never fear, sir.

[Exit.

Sir Per. This love of Sidney's for Constantia is not

unlikely. There is something promising in it.--Yes; I think it is not impossible to convert it into a special and immediate advantage. It is but trying. What's there?---If it misses, I am but where I was.

Enter TOMLINS.

Where is Maister Sidney?

Tom. In the dining-room, Sir Pertinax.

Sir Per. Tell him I would speak with him. [*Exit Tomlins.*---'T is more than probable. Spare to speak and spare to speed. Try---try---always try the human heart:---try is as good a maxim in politics as in war.---Why, suppose this Sidney now should be privy to his friend Charles' love for Constantia.---What then? good faith, it is natural to think that his own love will demand the preference---ay, and obtain it too.---Yes, self---self is an eloquent advocate on these occasions, and seldom loses his cause. I have the general principle of human nature at least to encourage me in the experiment; for only make it a man's interest to be a rascal, and I think we may safely depend upon his integrity---in serving himself.

Enter SIDNEY.

Sid. Sir Pertinax, your servant:---Mr. Tomlins told me you desired to speak with me.

Sir Per. Yes, I wanted to speak with you upon a very singular business. Maister Sidney give me your hand.---Guine it did not look like flattery, which I detest, I would tell you, Maister Sidney, that you are an honour to your cloth, your country, and to human nature.

Sid. Your approbation, sir, next to that of my conscience, is the best test of my endeavours, and highest applause they can receive.

Sir Per. Sir, you deserve it---richly deserve it. now, sir, the same care that you have had of Ch—the same my wife has taken of her favourite (stantia.—And sure, never were accomplishments knowledge or principles, social and religious, infintill a better nature.

Sid. In truth, sir, I think so too.

Sir Per. She is besides a gentlewoman, and o guid a family as any in this county.

Sid. So I understand, sir.

Sir Per. Sir, her father had a vast estate ; the w he dissipated and melted in feastings, and friendsl and charities, hospitalities, and sic kind of nonse —But to the business.—Maister Sidney, I you—yes, I love you—and I have been looking and contriving how to settle you in the world.—Si

for life, than this same Constantia, with sic a down with her as you yourself shall deem to petent, and an assurance of every canonical jency in my power to confer or promote.

Sir, your offer is noble and friendly: but though hest station would derive lustre from Constan- arms and worth, yet, were she more amiable ve could paint her in the lover's fancy—and y beyond the thirst of the miser's appetite—I ot—would not wed her. [Rises.

er. Not wed her! odswuns, man! your surprise Why so?—What hinders?

I beg you will not ask a reason for my refusal briefly and finally—it cannot be; nor is it a I can longer converse upon.

er. Weel, weel, weel, sir, I have done—I have sit down, man;—sit down again;—sit you down. ill mention it no more;—not but I must confess y till you, friend Sidney, that the match, had proved of my proposal, besides profiting you, have been of singular service till me likewise. er, you may still serve me as effectually as if d married her.

Then, sir, I am sure I will most heartily.

er. I believe it, friend Sidney, and I thank you. have nai friend to depend upon but yourself. rt is almost broke.—I cannot help these tears. nd, to tell you the fact at once—your friend s is struck with a most dangerous malady---a f insanity.—You see I cannot help weeping

when I think of it;---in short---this Constantia, I am afraid, has cast an evil eye upon him.---Do you understand me?

Sid. Not very well, sir.

Sir Per. Why, he is grievously smitten with the love of her; and, I am afraid, will never be cured without a little of your assistance.

Sid. Of my assistance! pray, sir, in what manner?

Sir Per. In what manner?---Lord, Maister Sidney, how can you be so dull? Why, how is any man cured of his love till a wench, but by ganging to bed till her? Now do you understand me?

Sid. Perfectly, sir---perfectly.

Sir Per. Vary weel.---Now then, my vary guid friend, gin you wou'd but give him that hint, and take an opportunity to speak a guid word for him till the wench;---and guin you wou'd likewise cast about a little now, and contrive to bring them together once; why, in a few days after, he wou'd nai care a pinch of snuff for her. [*Sidney starts up.*]---What is the matter with you, mon? What the devil gars you start and look so astounded?

Sid. Sir, you amaze me.---In what part of my mind or conduct have you found that baseness, which entitles you to treat me with this indignity?

Sir Per. Indignity! What indignity do you mean, sir? Is asking you to serve a friend with a wench, an indignity? Sir, am I not your patron and benefactor? Ha?

Sid. You are, sir, and I feel your bounty at my heart;

but the virtuous gratitude, that sowed the deep sense of it there, does not inform me that, in return, the tutor's sacred function, or the social virtue of the man, must be debased into the pupil's pander, or the patron's prostitute.

Sir Per. How! what, sir! do you dispute? Are you nai my dependent? ha! And do you hesitate about an ordinary civility, which is practised every day by men and women of the first fashion? Sir, let me tell you, however nice you may be, there is nai a client about the court that wou'd nai jump at sic an opportunity to oblige his patron.

Sid. Indeed, sir, I believe the doctrine of pimping for patrons, as well as that of prostituting eloquence and public trust for private lucre, may be learned in your party schools: for where faction and public venality are taught as measures necessary to good government and general prosperity—there every vice is to be expected.

Sir Per. Oho! oho! vary weel! vary weel! fine slander upon ministers! fine sedition against ment!—O, ye villain! you—you—you are a black sheep; and I'll mark you—I am glad you show yourself.—Yes, yes, you have taken off the mask at last; you have been in my service for many years, and I never knew your principles before.

Sid. Sir, you never affronted them before: if you had, you should have known them sooner.

Sir Per. It is vary weel.—I have done with you.—Ay, ay; now I can account for my son's conduct—

ther, or about doing sic an harmless innocent
your patron, you will never rise in the church.

Sid. Though my conduct, sir, should not rise in her power, I am sure it will in her favour the favour of my own conscience too, and in teem of all worthy men; and that, sir, is and dignity beyond what patrons, or any minis bestow.

Sid. What a rigorous, saucy, stiff-necked is! I see my folly now. I am undone by n policy.—This Sidney is the last man that shou been about my son. The fellow, indeed, hat him principles, that might have done vary wee the ancient Romans—but are damn'd unfit modern Britons.—Weel, guin I had a tl sons, I never wou'd suffer one of these Englis versity-bred fellows to be about a son of mine for they have sic an a pride of literature and ch and sic saucy, English notions of liberty con

rascal out of my house in a twinkling.—But what am I to do?—Zoons! he must nai marry this beggar; I cannot sit down tamely under that.—Stay—haud a wee.—By the blood, I have it.—Yes, I have hit upon it.—I'll have the wench smuggled till the highlands of Scotland to-morrow morning.—Yes, yes, I'll have her smuggled—

Enter BETTY HINT.

Betty. O! sir, I have got the whole secret out.

Sir Per. About what?

Betty. About Miss Constantia. I have just got all the particulars from farmer Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir Per. Weel, weel, but what is the story?—Quick, quick—what is it?

Betty. Why, sir, it is certain that Mrs. Constantia has a sweetheart, or a husband; a sort of a gentleman—or a gentleman's gentleman, they don't know which, that lodges at Gaffer Hodges's; and it is whispered all about the village that she is with child by him: for Sukey says she saw them together last night in the dark walk—and Mrs. Constantia was all in tears.

Sir Per. Zoons! I am afraid this is too guid news to be true.

Betty. O! sir, 'tis certainly true; for I myself have observed that she has looked very pale for some time past, and could not eat, and has qualms every hour of the day.—Yes, yes, sir—depend upon it, she is breeding, as sure as my name is Betty Hint.—Besides, sir,

till me.

Betty. I will, sir.

Enter JOHN, with a Packet and a Letter.

John. [*Putting the packet into his pocket.*] There you into my pocket.---There's nobody in the li so I'll e'en go through the short way.---Let n ---what is the name?---Mel---Mertil---O, no! Me at Gaffer Hodges's.

Sir Per. What letter is that, sir?

John. Letter, sir!

Sir Per. Give it me, sir.

John. An't please you, sir, it is not mine.

Sir Per. Deliver it this instant, sirrah, or I'll your head.

John. [*Giving the letter.*] There, there, your ho

Sir Per. Begone, rascal.---This, I suppose let us intill the whole business.

John. [*Aside.*] You have got the letter, old

myself into your dear arms.'—Zoons! this letter is invaluable.—Aha! madam--yes, this will do---this will do, I think.—Let me see—how is it directed? ---‘ To Mr. Melville.’—Vary weel.

Enter BETTY.

O! Betty, you are an excellent wench---this letter is worth a million.

Betty. Is it as I suspected?---to her gallant?

Sir Per. It is---it is.—Bid Constantia pack out of the house this instant---and let them get a chaise ready to carry her wherever she pleases.—But first send my wife and son hither.

Betty. I shall, sir.

Sir Per. Do so—begone. [*Exit. Betty.*] Aha! Maister Charles, I believe I shall cure you of your passion for a beggar now. I think he cannot be so infatuated as to be a dupe till a strumpet.—Let me see ---how am I to act now? --Why, like a true politician, I must pretend most sincerity where I intend most deceit.

Enter EGERTON and Lady MACSYCOPHANT.

Weel, Charles, notwithstanding the misery you have brought upon me, I have sent for you and your mother in order to convince you both of my affection and my readiness to forgive---nay, and even to indulge your perverse passion :---for, since I find this Constantia has got hold of your heart, and that your mother and you think that you can never be happy

joy ;---for had you not consented to his marryin
we all should have been miserable.

Sir *Per.* Weel ; I am glad I have found a v
please you both at last.---But, my dear Cl
suppose now that this spotless vestal---this won
virtue---this idol of your heart, should be a con
wanton after aw ; or should have an engagem
marriage or an intrigue with another man, and i
making a dupe of you aw this time :---I say, only
pose it, Charles---what would you think of her

Eger. I should think her the most deceitful, a
most subtle of her sex---and, if possible, would
think of her again.

Sir *Per.* Will you give me your honour of tha

Eger. Most solemnly, sir.

Sir *Per.* Enough. I am satisfied. You mak
young again. Your prudence has brought te
joy fra my very vitals. I was afraid you was
nated with the charms of a crack.---Do you ke

Sir *Per.* It is so : and a better evidence it is than any that can be given by the human tongue. Here is a warm, rapturous, lascivious letter, under the hypocritical syren's ain hand---her ain hand, sir.

Eger. Pray, sir, let us hear it.

Sir *Per.* Ay, ay ; here---take and read it yourself---
Eloisa never writ a warmer nor a ranker to her Abelard---but judge yourselves.

Eger. [*Reads.*] ' I have only time to tell you, that the family came down sooner than I expected, and that I cannot bless my eyes with the sight of you till the evening.---The notes and jewels, which the bearer of this will deliver to you, were presented to me, since I saw you, by the son of my benefactor.-----

Sir *Per.* [*Interrupts him by his remarks.*] Now mark.

Eger. [*Reads.*] ' All which I beg you will convert to your immediate use'-----

Sir *Per.* Mark, I say.

Eger. [*Reads.*] ' For my heart has no room for any wish or fortune, but what contributes to your relief and happiness'-----

Sir *Per.* Oh ! Charles, Charles, do you see, sir, what a dupe she makes of you ? But mark what follows.

Eger. [*Reads.*] ' O ! how I long to throw myself into your dear, dear arms ; to sooth your fears, your apprehensions, and your sorrows'-----

Sir *Per.* I suppose the spark has heard of your offering to marry her, and is jealous of you.

Eger. Sir, I can only say I am astonished.

Lady *Mac.* It is incredible.

Sir *Per.* Stay, read it out---read it out, pray: ah! she is a subtle devil.

Eger. [*Reads.*] 'I have something to tell you of the utmost moment, but will reserve it till we meet this evening in the dark walk'-----

Sir *Per.* In the dark walk---in the dark walk---ah! an evil-eyed curse upon her!---Yes, yes! she has been often in the dark walk, I believe.---But read on.

Eger. [*Reads.*] 'In the mean time banish all fears, and hope the best from fortune, and your ever dutiful

CONSTANTIA HARRINGTON.'

Sir *Per.* There---there's a warm epistle for you! in short, the hussy, you must know, is married till the fellow.

Eger. Not unlikely, sir.

Lady *Mac.* Indeed, by her letter, I believe she is.

Sir *Per.* Nay, I know she is: but look at the hand ---peruse it---convince yourselves.

Eger. Yes, yes, it is her hand; I know it well, sir.

Sir *Per.* Madam, will you look at it? perhaps it may be forged.

Lady *Mac.* No, sir, it is no forgery. Well! after this, I think I shall never trust human nature.

Sir *Per.* Now, madam, what amends can you make me for countenancing your son's passion for sic a strumpet? And you, sir, what have you to say for your disobedience and your phrenzy? O! Charles, Charles.-----

Eger. Pray, sir, be patient; compose yourself a moment: I will make you any compensation in my power.

Sir Per. Then instantly sign the articles of marriage.

Eger. The lady, sir, has never yet been consulted; and I have some reason to believe that her heart is engaged to another man.

Sir Per. Sir, that is nai business of yours. I know she will consent, and that 's aw we are to consider.--- Oh! here comes my lord.

Enter Lord LUMBERCOURT.

Lord Lum. Sir Pertinax, every thing is ready, and the lawyers wait for us.

Sir Per. We attend your lordship. Where is Lady Rodolpha?

Lord Lum. Giving some female consolation to poor Constantia. Why, my lady, ha, ha, ha! I hear your vestal has been flirting.

Sir Per. Yes, yes, my lord, she is in vary guid order for any man that wants a wife and an heir till his estate intill the bargain.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir, there is a man below that wants to speak to your honour upon particular business.

Sir Per. Sir, I cannot speak till any body now--- he must come another time;---haud---stay---what--- is he a gentleman?

Sam. He looks something like one, sir---a sort of a gentleman---but he seems to be in a kind of a passion; for when I asked his name, he answered hastily, It is no matter, friend---go tell your master there is a gentleman here that must speak to him directly.

Sir *Per.* Must? ha! vary peremptory indeed; pr'ythee, let's see him for curiosity sake. [*Exit Sam.*]

Enter Lady RODOLPHA.

Lady *Rod.* O! my Lady Macsycophant, I am come an humble advocate for a weeping piece of female frailty, wha begs she may be permitted to speak till your ladyship, before you finally reprobate her.

Sir *Per.* I beg your pardon, Lady Rodolpha, but it must not be: see her she shall not.

Lady *Mac.* Nay, there can be no harm, my dear, in hearing what she has to say for herself.

Sir *Per.* I tell you it shall not be.

Lady *Mac.* Well, my dear, I have done.

Enter SAM and MELVILLE.

Sam. Sir, that is my master.

Sir *Per.* Weel, sir, what is your urgent business with me?

Mel. To shun disgrace and punish baseness.

Sir *Per.* Punish baseness! what does the fellow mean? Wha are you, sir?

Mel. A man, sir, and one whose fortune once bore as proud a sway as any within this county's limits.

Lord *Lum.* You seem to be a soldier, sir.

Mel. I was, sir; and have the soldier's certificate to prove my service—rags and scars. In my heart, for ten long years in India's parching clime, I bore my country's cause; and in noblest dangers sustained it with my sword: at length ungrateful peace has laid

me down where welcome war first took me up---in poverty, and the dread of cruel creditors.—Paternal affection brought me to my native land, in quest of an only child : I found her, as I thought, amiable as parental fondness could desire ; but lust and foul seduction have snatched her from me : and hither am I come, fraught with a father's anger, and a soldier's honour, to seek the seducer, and glut revenge.

Lady Mac. Pray, sir, who is your daughter ?

Mel. I blush to own her—but---Constantia.

Eger. Is Constantia your daughter, sir ?

Mel. She is ; and was the only comfort that nature, fortune, or my own extravagance had left me.

Sir Per. Guid traith, then, I fancy you will find but vary little comfort fra her, for she is nai better than she should be.---She has had nai damage in this mansion. I am told she is with bairn ; but you may gang till Hadley, till one farmer Hodges's, and there you may learn the whole story, and wha the father of the bairn is, fra a cheeld they call Melville.

Mel. Melville !

Sir Per. Yes, sir, Melville.

Mel. O ! would to heaven she had no crime to answer but her commerce with Melville !---No, sir, he is not the man ; it is your son, your Egerton, that has seduced her ; and here, sir, are the evidence of his seduction.

Eger. Of my seduction.

Mel. Of your's, sir, if your name be Egerton.

Eger. I am that man, sir ; but pray what is your evidence !

Mel. These bills and these gorgeous jewels, not to be had in her menial state, but at the price of chastity.—Not an hour since she sent them—impudently sent them—by a servant of this house:—contagious infamy started from their touch.

Eger. Sir, perhaps you may be mistaken concerning the terms on which she received them. Do you but clear her conduct with Melville, and I will instantly satisfy your fears concerning the jewels and her virtue.

Mel. Sir, you give me new life: you are my better angel. I believe in your words—your looks:—know then, I am that Melville.

Sir Per. How, sir, you that Melville that was at farmer Hodges's!

Mel. The same, sir: it was he brought my Constantia to my arms; lodged and secreted me—once my lowly tenant—now my only friend. The fear of inexorable creditors made me change my name from Harrington to Melville, till I could see and consult some who once called themselves my friends.

Eger. Sir, suspend your fears and anger but for a few minutes; I will keep my word with you religiously, and bring your Constantia to your arms, as virtuous and as happy as you could wish her.

[*Exit with Lady Mac.*]

Sir Per. The clearing up of this wench's virtue is damned unlucky: I am afraid it will ruin all our affairs again:—however, I have one stroke still in my head that will secure the bargain with my lord, let matters gang as they will. [*Aside.*] But I wonder,

Maister Melville, that you did nai pick up some little matter of siller in the Indies; ah! there have been onny fortunes snapt up there, of late years, by some of the military blades.

Mel. It is very true, sir; but it is an observation among soldiers, that there are some men who never meet with any thing in the service but blows and ill-fortune.—I was one of those even to a proverb.

Sir Per. Ah! 'tis a pity, sir, a great pity now, that you did nai get a Mogul, or some sic an animal, intill our clutches. Ah! I should like to have the strangling of a Nabob, the rummaging of his gold dust, his jewel closet, and aw his magazines of bars and ingots. [a, ha, ha!—guid traith man, sic an a fellow would be a bonny cheeld to bring till this town, and to exhibit him riding on an elephant: upon honour, a man might raise a poll-tax by him, that would gang near to pay the debts of the nation.

Enter EGERTON, CONSTANTIA, Lady MACSYCOPHANT, and SIDNEY.

Eger. Sir, I promised to satisfy your fears concerning your daughter's virtue; and my best proof to you, and all the world, that I think her not only the most chaste, but the most deserving of her sex, is, that I have made her the partner of my heart, and the tender guardian of my earthly happiness for life.

Sir Per. How! married!

Eger. I know, sir, at present we shall meet your anger; but time, reflection, and our dutiful conduct, we hope, will reconcile you to our happiness.

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Sir *Per.* Never, never—and could I make you, her, and aw your issue beggars, I would move hell, heaven, and earth, to do it.

Lord *Lum.* Why, Sir Pertinax, this is a total revolution, and will entirely ruin my affairs.

Sir *Per.* My lord, with the consent of your lordship and Lady Rodolpha, I have an expedient to offer, that will not only punish that rebellious villain, but answer every end that your lordship and the lady proposed by the intended match with him.

Lord *Lum.* I doubt it much, Sir Pertinax—I doubt it much:—But what is it, sir?—What is your expedient?

Sir *Per.* My lord, I have another son; and, provided the lady and your lordship have nai objection till him, every article of that rebel's intended marriage shall be amply fulfilled upon Lady Rodolpha's union with my younger son.

Lord *Lum.* Why, that is an expedient indeed, Sir Pertinax.—But what say you, Rodolpha?

Lady *Rod.* Nay, nay, my lord, as I had nai reason to have the least affection till my cousin Egerton, and as my intended marriage with him was entirely an act of obedience till my grandmother, provided my cousin Sandy will be as agreeable till her ladyship as my cousin Charles here would have been—I have nai the least objection till the change. Ay, ay! one brother is as guid to Rodolpha as another.

Sir *Per.* I'll answer, madam, for your grandmother.—Now, my lord, what say you?

Lord *Lum.* Nay, Sir Pertinax, so the agreement stands, all is right again. Come, child, let us be gone.—Ay, ay, so my affairs are made easy, it is equal to me whom she marries.—I say, Sir Pertinax, let them be but easy, and rat me, if I care if she incorporates with the Cham of Tartary. [Exit.

Sir *Per.* As to you, my Lady Macsycophant, I suppose you concluded, before you gave your consent till this match, that there would be an end of aw intercourse betwixt you and me.—Live with your Constantia, madam, your son, and that black sheep there.---Live with them.---You shall have a jointure; but not a bawbee besides, living or dead, shall you or any of your issue, ever see of mine;—and so my vengeance light upon you aw together. [Exit.

Lady *Rod.* Weel, cousin Egerton, in spite of the ambitious phrenzy of your father, and the thoughtless dissipation of mine, Don Cupid has at last carried his point in favour of his devotees. But I must now take my leave.---Lady Macsycophant, your most obedient. Maister Sidney, yours.—Permit me, Constantia, to have the honour of congratulating myself on our alliance.

Con. Madam, I shall ever study to deserve and to return this kindness.

Lady *Rod.* I am sure you will.---But, ah!--I neglect my poor Sandy aw this while! and, guid traith, mine ain heart begins to tell me what his feels, and chides me for tarrying so long.---I will therefore fly till him on the wings of love and guid news; for I am sure

the poor lad is pining with the pip of expectation and anxious jeopardy. And so, guid folks, I leave you with the fag end of an auld North Country wish:—
' May mutual love and guid humour be the guests of your hearts, the theme of your tongues, and the blithsome subjects of aw your tricksey dreams through the rugged road of this deceitful world ; and may our fathers be an example till ourselves to treat our bairns better than they have treated us !' [Exit.

Eger. You seem melancholy, sir.

Mel. These precarious turns of fortune, sir, will press upon my heart---for, notwithstanding my Constantia's happiness, and mine in her's---I own I cannot help feeling some regret, that my misfortunes should be the cause of any disagreement between a father and the man to whom I am under the most endearing obligations.

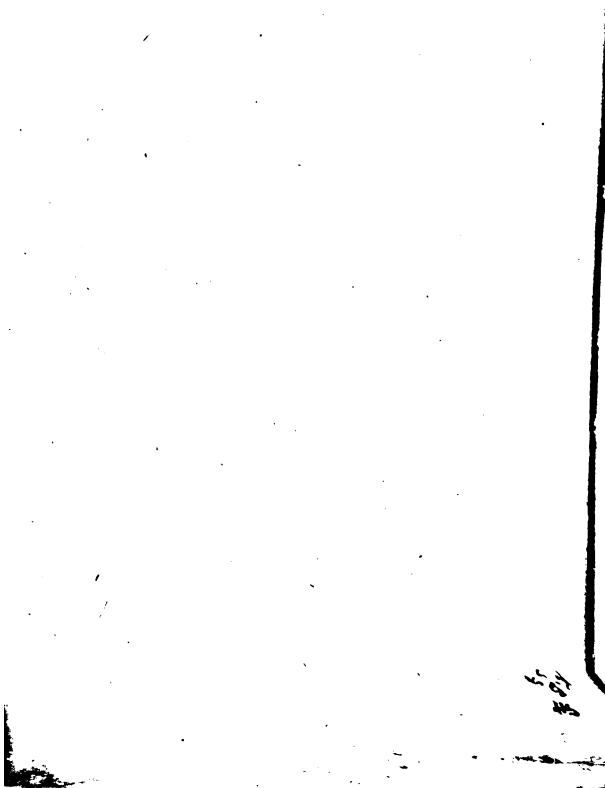
Eger. You have no share in his disagreement ; for had not you been born, from my father's nature, some other cause of his resentment must have happened.—But for a time at least, sir, and, I hope, for life, affliction and angry vicissitudes have taken their leaves of us all.—If affluence can procure content and ease, they are within our reach.—My fortune is ample, and shall be dedicated to the happiness of this domestic circle.—

*My scheme, though mock'd by knave, coquet, and fool,
To thinking minds will prove this golden rule :
In all pursuits, but chiefly in a wife,
Not wealth, but morals, make the happy life.*









[REDACTED]

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